

DOCTORAL THESIS

‘The Elephant in the Room?’

An exploration into how clients construct and manage the role of being Mixed Race within therapy

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*‘The Elephant in the Room?’: An
exploration into how clients construct
and manage the role of being Mixed
Race within therapy*

By

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Abstract

It was only as recently as 2001 that The National Census of Population (2001) included the category 'mixed race' for the first time in a British context. By 2006 the UK census showed a percentage increase, stating that mixed race people occupied 14.6% of the minority ethnic population from the previous census. The current ONS (2011) census shows that this figure is up nearly 50%, to almost a million mixed race people in the UK, yet there is a scarcity of mixed race research within the therapeutic field, with no published evidence of empirical studies investigating the British perspective. The present study draws on social constructionist and post- structural thinking, to observe how mixed race clients manage and construct their identity within the counselling room. Using 8 female heterosexual mixed race participants in medium to long term therapy, the study utilised Charmaz's (2006) constructionist grounded theory to investigate the emerging discursive practices produced between the client and therapist, as well as examining the influence of the therapist in the production of such practices. The present findings suggested 3 main categories which pertained to: the misrecognition of mixed race clients; the therapist's negotiation of the mixed race narrative; ontological insecurity and the cosmopolitan self. The study's findings propose the formulation of a mixed race counselling model, incorporating social scripts of relevant insights into mixed race identity. It also urges counselling and psychology organisations to revise their ethical frameworks to include race in a meaningful way, and for training institutions to ensure understandings of race and mixed race are assessed within the context of working with clients.

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1

Introduction

1.1 Mixed Race in Context

The aims of the research were to uncover how mixed race as a role is constructed, and how it is managed within the therapeutic setting, what factors of mixed race identity arise within therapy (if any), and how this experience influences the negotiation of Self. In doing so, the study also aimed to uncover what discursive practices these produce between the client and therapist, and how the therapist influences this experience.

Mixed race traditionally refers to a person with one ethnic minority parent of colour and one white parent – a definition that I have chosen for this study because it is the one most mixed race people ‘take for granted’ (Alibhai- Brown, 2001). I acknowledge the term is limited, and for the purpose of this study, it is questioned extensively (Song, 2010a; Song, 2010b; Song & Harshem, 2010) within the domain of counselling psychology. It was only as recently as 2001 that The National Census of Population (2001) included the category ‘mixed race’ for the first time in a British context. By 2006 the UK census (Office of National Statistics, 2006) showed a percentage increase, stating that they occupied 14.6% of the minority ethnic population from the previous census. The current ONS (2011) census shows that this figure is up nearly 50%, to almost a million mixed race people in the UK, with further discussion of this data being planned by the ONS for publication as this study is being written. A third of the statistics are shown to be mixed African- Caribbean and white, followed by Asian/ white. The ONS states that this figure is not due to higher birth rates, but as a result of more racially mixed relationships. Haringey- North London shows the highest population of mixed race at 4.4% (ONS, 2011). The last decade’s population growth suggests that the mixed race population of Britain will continue to rise steeply.

Much has been discussed in the media regarding the expansion of the mixed race population (Rogers [Guardian], 2011; Easton, [BBC News], 2011; Katwala, [The New Statesman], 2012; Eccles, [Daily Mail], 2012). However, there is a general lack of academic research regarding mixed race. Furthermore, this population increase has yet to be reflected within British counselling or psychology literature. With the exception of a few theorists- who are mostly sociological (Ifekwunigwe, 1999; Aspinall, 2000; Parker & Song, 2001; Tizzard & Phoenix, 2003; Olumide, 2002; Gilbert, 2005; Dupont- Joshua, 2006; Haritaworn, 2009a, 2009b; Song, 2010), little exists in British psychological literature. This is in sharp contrast to the work carried out in the US (Cross, 1971; Hall, 1980; Morten & Atkinson, 1983; Brown, 1990; Porter & Washington, 1993; Root, 1992, 1998; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). The lack of published mixed race research in Britain is argued as being a form of ‘gentle violence’ (Moon, 2011) toward a group that cannot be easily categorised under the heading of ‘diversity’. This leaves mixed race people facing a pressure to fit into an existing cultural zeitgeist of values, attitudes and beliefs which are more relevant to monoracial populations (Taylor & Nanney, 2011).

This study aimed to explore how counselling psychologists can meaningfully engage with a mixed race client’s narrative, while at the same time helping them to explore the deeper meaning of Self. It also hoped to understand how this is managed within the therapeutic space between therapist and client. Models of mixed race identity formation have been developed in the U.S (Poston, 1990; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Root, 2003), yet little research exists on how mixed race clients negotiate identity in relation to the therapeutic context. To date, no empirical research has investigated the British perspective. The thesis examines mixed race in terms of historical (Fanon, 1952, 1967 & 1968) and post- modernist approaches (Haritaworn, 2009a, 2009b; Song, 2010a; 2010b). The literature review will also

examine post- structuralist and interactionist approaches and their relevance in forming the theoretical perspectives which underpin the aims of the study.

The study utilised Charmaz' (2002) qualitative interactionist approach to grounded theory. This method allowed an interrogation of social concepts of identity construction. Using this method, intensive semi- structured interviews were conducted allowing the researcher to invite a detailed discussion of the questions being asked. The questions were devised based on the aims of the research, and thus helped to uncover the processes, meanings and intentions within the client- therapist dyad. The method and methodology section will examine the use of grounded theory for this study, and explain how it was implemented.

Participants were chosen who self- categorise as mixed race and have previously engaged in counselling. Approximately 8 participants were chosen using theoretical sampling. Past research on mixed race identity using grounded theory has shown that individuals who choose to identify as mixed race see it as a positive identity (Henriksen, 2001), however that research did not include a relational perspective and therefore offers little scope in terms of the impact of therapy on managing the 'role' of being mixed race. The results section will illustrate how the participants experienced their therapy in relation to identity construction.

To achieve the goal of competent practice, it is argued that counselling psychologists must have an awareness of the needs British mixed race clients have, in terms of identity and personhood. In doing so, the practitioner may minimise their assumptions and biases, thus forming a therapeutic alliance based on knowledge of how mixed race people manage therapy and construct identity. The discussion section will give an overview and implications of the findings. It will also offer a critique of the study.

The research objectives hoped to explore the contested space between client and therapist, thus extracting what knowledge may currently be missing in practice. The aim of this was to unravel the processes which take place in therapy in relation to identity and existential meaning.

The term *therapy* is used within this thesis as it invites a discussion of all counselling and psychotherapy practice in keeping with the pluralistic tenets of Counselling Psychology.

1.2 Research Aims

The aims of the research were to uncover how mixed race identity is constructed and negotiated within therapy and what this means in terms of personhood.

The following objectives were designed to meet these aims:

1. To uncover what discursive practices are produced between the client and therapist
2. To examine the influence of the therapist within this experience.
3. To examine the disjuncture between the client's needs in therapy and the recognition of these needs by the therapist

1.3 Main Research Questions

1. How do clients experience and manage therapy in terms of Self?
2. How do clients construct their identity based on their 'role' of being mixed race within the therapeutic setting?
3. How do clients' actions, beliefs and intentions influence the therapeutic dyad?

1.4 The contribution to knowledge which may be expected

It is proposed that the growing mixed race population in Britain (Aspinall, 2000) means that there is a need for the Counselling Psychologist to become more knowledgeable

about how mixed race clients manage therapy from a relational perspective. In doing so, therapists will gain a better understanding of what aspects of identity arise within therapy. It has been noted that monoracial identity models do not recognise the social complexities of adopting a mixed race identity in a monoracial world (Miville, 2005), and yet little mixed race research exists in counselling journals. A recent review of mixed race articles found in counselling journals showed that there may be a reluctance on the part of the profession to publish mixed race research (Edwards & Pedrotti, 2008). Edwards and Pedrotti (2008) surmise that only 18 articles on mixed race were found between 1998- 2006 in 6 primary counselling journals. In consideration of the burgeoning population of mixed race people in Britain, it is proposed that it is not possible to continue to overlook the fact there may be unique requirements regarding therapeutic competence. Also, in order to recognise ‘the Other’ in this instance, it is necessary to have an awareness of how to initiate the exploration of the client’s Self in terms of the actions and beliefs they hold of their socially constructed identity, whilst having an awareness of where the therapist is located, and the intersectionality of the two. More recent examinations of racial identity frameworks, propose that identity validation by others is crucial to emotional wellbeing (Lou, Lamonde & Wilson, 2011). It is argued that this is relevant to the therapy room and crucial to enabling change.

No published empirical research has been carried out to investigate the British perspective of how mixed race identity is managed within the counselling room. It is proposed that this research will be the first to investigate how the ‘social context’ influences a mixed race client’s construction of Self within the therapeutic setting. Previous research has shown that geographical area plays an important role in how mixed race people construct their identity (Root, 2003; Song, 2010a). Sampling from different geographical locations was carried out, helping to overlap commonalities which may be generalizable to the group being studied.

It is expected that the research informs counselling psychologist's understanding of how ascribed identity and recognition of the Other may enhance clinical practice and meet the needs of this group. The study's aim is to offer an explanation of what knowledge and skills are needed by counselling psychologists to work with mixed race clients in a meaningful way.

Importantly, a lack of research exists in relation to mixed race studies composed of samples other than Black/White (Pedrotti et al, 2008; Lou, Lamonde, et al, 2011). This current study may offer an insight which reflects the immigrant history of Britain, by sampling clients from a variety of mixed race heritages.

Literature Review

2.1 Race and Mixed Race: A Historical Observation

Race has undergone a radical transformation over the past decade. Initially understood as the property of the body (Bamshad, Wooding, Benjamin & Stephens, 2004), for example, the body being biologically ‘raced’ as either ‘black’ or ‘white’ (Zack, 1993). More contemporary versions take ‘race’ as a social construct (Hughes, 2010), representing the cultural mores and values of a given society, where the body acts as a social border between one population and the other. The notion of power in relation to race mean that racial categorizations and the historical aspect of this are relevant to the mixed race arena.

To discuss the concept of mixed race, it is necessary to briefly look at the theoretical underpinnings of race. The word ‘race’ derived from the French word *rasse* or the Italian word *razza*, roughly translates into *breed* or *strain* (Bamshad, et al, 2004). Scientist Johann Blumenbach’s (1775) classifications of race were used widely in early scientific debate. The classifications incorporated Caucasian; Mongolian; Black; Australian; American/ Red race; and the Malayan/ Brown race. These distinctions served to facilitate genetic research where borders could be drawn for the purpose of understanding polymorphism variations caused by genetic drift and other factors which may impact on biological disease (Bamshad & Olsen, 2003). These distinctions are problematic in the social understanding of race, as an ambiguity lay between the scientific postulations of race and the social construct of it. Society’s understanding of race may be complicated by these historical legacies of racial categorisation.

The mixed race person therefore is gazed upon without a meaningful understanding of their racial personhood, or of what race encompasses in social terms. It is clear that the biological commonalities which predispose a person categorically into different races are irrelevant (Pinker, 2002), as a common DNA exists to categorise man into one race. However, this does not resolve the issue of the social construction of race. Race continues to be a powerful social construct and a signifier for phenotype categorisation (Morrison, 1992). Roediger (1991) states, that although race is omnipresent in society, it becomes problematic when phenotype is judged as meaningful to the debate.

Judith Butler's (1993) essay discusses the performative aspect of being 'raced' and how society's meaning is derived from how colour is 'seen'. Using a psychoanalytic framework in the understanding of Rodney King's 1991 brutal beating at the hands of white police officers in Los Angeles, she asserts that there is a repetition compulsion of racist impulses being projected onto the body of colour. The interpellation of the person of colour is therefore justified through this. For instance, how King was seen that day was merely as a result of his black bodily existence. Using this concept of schematic racism, the mixed race person is seen through the hyperbole of colour. However, for mixed race people there is also the eschewing of whiteness which may have to be done by others to address the embodiment of 'mixedness'. They cannot be framed or seen by the hegemonic practice of racial order. Therefore how mixed race is performed is unconstructed and threatening to society's pre-existing racial schemas (Fiske & Taylor, 1984).

Butler's (1997a) concept of performativity also suggests that the body has no ontological status- or *Self* per se, except for the reality of its physical parts, which she refers to as the bodily 'subject'. If this is so, it is assumed that the physicality of the body, to have legitimacy, must be endowed with a history of embodied status. In keeping with her

proposition of the feared body of colour, it is proposed that the mixed race person is perceived as belonging to a racialized category and culture. However, if we are to utilise Bourdieu's (1991) concept of social capital- that of having a legitimacy through historically embedded acts, which gain the individual a symbolic 'profit', the mixed race body may not be deemed to have capital nor ontological status. This consideration highlights the difficulty the mixed race person encounters in trying to understand how they are *seen*. Their racialized body may be seen as ambiguous and thus threatening by virtue of difference.

Critical Race Theory ([CRT] Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) supports the idea that racialization is a social construction by the dominant group, based on physical traits over that of high- order traits, such as intelligence. CRT also proposes that how people are racialized is greatly influenced by the social and political culture of the time, changing in accordance to what society needs. If this is true, the mixed race person may find difficulty in fitting into the dominant discourse of racialization, unless society recognizes mixed race as being worthy as a social construct. Earlier US theories of mixed race have used historically embedded situations stemming from slavery, which categorise on solely phenotype demarcations of 'black' and 'white'. These early social processes were noted by W.E.B. Du Bois, the African –American light skinned activist. He described the stigma of seeing himself through the eyes of others and through the eyes of a society that condemned him. His light skin created a racial dissonance for others in the early 1900's. He articulated this as a sense of 'double-consciousness':

"It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity (1903, p179)".

Racial mixing in the US during the time of Du- Bois (1903) disallowed the use of a language to identify himself and other mixed race people by. The debate of mixed race in early US law was formulated on the 'one drop' of blood hypodescent rule (Jones, 2000), regardless of colour. Jacques Lacan's (1953) writings on language, give an insight into the concept of self- agency through language. Here, it is said that linguistics produce a revolution in knowledge. If this be the case, the symbolic wording of 'mixed race' may be seen to engender an 'Otherness' which cannot be located or suppositioned through pre-existing understandings of categorisation. Lacan (1953) proposes that the person is enslaved by virtue of their proper name, and it is this which 'lay down the elementary structures of culture (p.148)'. By definition of this, mixed race people may be positioned by the Other's understanding of the term *mixed race*, and their individual ethnically embedded belief-systems. 'Otherness' is seen by Homi Bhabha (1994) as belonging to a colonial discourse, where a stereotyped view is taken of what is outside of the racial white 'norm'. Bhabha (1994) uses a collection of philosophical and post- colonial writings to discuss Otherness. The main concern of his writing is the political and colonial subjugation of difference, which creates Otherness. This will be discussed further within the review.

2.2 Modelling Mixed Race Identity

The historical models of mixed race identity must be deemed to be an understanding of the subject in that given time-frame and context. This is highlighted in the elementary writings on race by Du- Bois (1903), which overlook a deeper understanding of society's responsibility in why and how mixed race people perceive 'selfhood'. Symbolic interactionist George Herbert Mead (1925) described a more multiple view of identity to that of Du- Bois (1903), which is comprised of individuals belonging to social groups which correspond to the

person's multiple selves, dependent on their social group or setting. This can be used to highlight the fluid and situational nature of Self for people of mixed race.

Early models of mixed race identity development, such as Poston's (1990) *Biracial Identity Development Model*, describe the imposition by others that mixed race people should fit into pre-existing racial categories. He discusses the counselling implications for working with people of mixed race heritage, suggesting that counsellors should assess their own prejudices regarding mixed relationships and mixed race. The essence of this model is that counsellors must be knowledgeable of what difficulties mixed race people may encounter in the outside world. Although this must be a vital consideration, the article overlooks the interwoven nature of hierarchical societal ideology and mixed race discourse, and assumes that familial and social interactions are isolated from this.

A more interactionist perspective of mixed race was focused on by Cathy Tashiro (2002). Her research, based on interviews with 20 older mixed race adults, describes how people of mixed race are exposed to contradictory social processes around race, as result of factors such as their embodied status, making it difficult for them to construct the unity of Self to which Mead (1925) refers. Tashiro (2002) also points out the need to observe the power of representation, stating that if a negative representation of identity is evident in social processes a person may be influenced by this when perceiving which identity they choose. This supports the symbolic interactionist perspectives (Blumer, 1969) which emphasise the importance of interaction in developing one's identity. However, the marginalisation that mixed race people experience is shown to be underpinned by the need to belong. Social Identity Theory ([SIT] Tajfel & Turner, 1986) proposes a more psychological conjecture, where identity is based on the striving to achieve positive self- esteem, thus culminating in assimilation with similar group members. The result of this is seen as a '*positive*

distinctiveness'. What is absent from Tashiro's (2002) debate is that of society's deviance in the way it views mixed race. The focus again, being on the mixed race person's limited choice of categorisation, minimises any discussion regarding the existence of a macro- level hegemony. Therefore the mixed race person, within her study, is seen to be positioned between the stepping stones of racial choice, without interrogation of what may be dysfunctional regarding the social norms of a given society.

2.3 Lawlessness to Post Structuralism: Perspectives of Mixed Race

Society's attitude toward mixed race is shown to be underpinned by fear (Gilroy 1982; Leonardo & Porter, 2010). This is further described in Butler's (1997a) writings in *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. Butler (1997a) highlights the injurious nature of speech and the Foucauldian model of power which underpin it. She conceptualises performativity as being a product of language- proposing that language is governed by the power assertions of state, and thus society, resulting in a racist pedagogy of what is feared. This supports the early US historical legal boundaries of race (Hoelscher, 2004), and the stigma which was attached to mixing. Proposals such as 'anti miscegenation' (Charles Davenport ([1928], cited Provine, 1986), which stated that 'cross – breeding' by persons of different races would lead the "offspring to have inferior and disharmonious emotional, intellectual and physical characteristics (p.859)", are abound with notions of tragedy and dysfunction. All of these illustrate what Butler (1997b) calls regulatory regimes, where regimes of judgement are imposed by society, subjecting and subjugating through a ruling or verdict on the mixed race person's life, of what is acceptable to the social norms.

Although Britain did not impose laws against inter – marriage historically, evidence of stigmatisation of those who produced children has been evident (Gilroy, 1982; Lawless,

1995), leading to misgivings of ‘half caste’ children and ideas of hybridity. Earlier writing such as Robert Park’s ‘cultural hybrid’ (1928) and Everett Stonequist’s (1961) ‘marginal man’ theory are often cited within mixed race literature, showcasing society’s ‘neurotic’ stance on mixed race. If one is to use Melanie Klein’s (1946) concept of the *schizoid position*—where what may create anxiety for a person is split off and projected in some way onto another as a defence— and apply it to society as a whole, it could be theorised that society is indeed positioned within the schizoid frame of beliefs and intentions, regarding the person of mixed race heritage. Therefore, what is difficult and cannot be tolerated must be denied. This is evident in Park’s (1928) and Stonequist’s (1961) suppositions, where the mixed race person is seen as a ‘hybrid’ who must live in two antagonising hierarchical societies, creating a division of Self. On the assumption that this historical knowledge creates power oriented discourses in contemporary understandings of mixed race, conflicts in Self for people of mixed race must be gazed upon in the present day as being created by a ‘split’ schizoid society.

British research conducted by Jin Haritaworn (2009a; 2009b) focuses on this very concept of the ‘abnormal’ versus ‘normal’ theorisation of mixed race embodiment. Using interviews with mixed Thai- white participants, Haritaworn (2009a) uses Fanon’s (1952) existential ideas on ‘dissection’, stating that mixed race is constructed through ‘a legacy of colonial archives of knowledge’ (p.116). His research highlights how society reads the ambivalent mixed race body through the lens of ‘essentialist’ discourse. The person is thus ‘mobilized and de- categorised’ through this encounter to fit with what is considered ‘normal’. Haritaworn (2009a) hence urges the contestation of such power discourses in society as the route to change. This poststructuralist theorisation of mixed race highlights the existing pathological social order of mixed race, which abjures the mixed race person of their selfhood. However, if *Self* is seen as socially constructed and *Being* as a philosophically stable

ideal, it is suggested that the mixed race person is faced with a challenge where *Self* and *Being* must be negotiated. Antony Giddens's (1991) theorisation of ontological security suggests that *being* is a 'reflexively organised endeavour (p.5)'. In keeping with this is Anoop Nayak's (2006) critique of post-structural ideas of race. He questions how ontological security can be discussed amongst a dialogue where race is seen as a construct. Therefore, it may be that an ontological ideal is lacking in society, where the mixed race person is able to develop their *Self* through the lens of a society that recognises their existence.

Ronald Laing's (1960) discussion of ontological *insecurity*- although aimed at severely distressed clients, highlight some key points that are relevant to working with mixed race clients; that ontological insecurity can be fatal to the person if their life experience has not enabled them to develop an authentic way of 'being'; that the relatedness of the therapist-client dyad is crucial to the client's sense of isolation as a result of being misunderstood by the world, as well as their feelings of being engulfed by others. Laing (1960) also states that the person can implode if their feelings of isolation are not attended to. The essence of Laing's (1960) illustration of a divided person is on the family as being a primal factor in their subsequent distress. However, little is mentioned regarding intersectional aspects such as race and how this may impact further on ontological insecurity. What *can* be used within his work is how ontological insecurity is perpetuated by a lack of relatedness to others, and the importance of therapy in mediating this. What is also brought to mind is the fragile ontological space which mixed race people must locate themselves in, as a result of the relentless questioning of their identity in the outside world.

2.4 The Socially Constructed Mixed Self

The social construction of emotions has been discussed widely in literature (Averill, 1980; Hochschild, 1983; Harre, 1986; Lutz, 1988). Much of its discussion centres on the understanding that emotion is no longer considered a bio- psychological entity which focuses on primal feelings of anger or sadness (Le Doux, 1996). The new wave of emotion literature is located in the understanding that emotion is dynamic, and dependent on social interactions. It is this notion that Boiger & Mesquita (2012) analyse in their study. They give a complex account of the various confluences which tie emotion together as a constructed paradigm. The main aspect of this being that emotion is created by different levels of interaction; the moment- by- moment; developing and on-going relationships; and sociocultural contexts. All three of these levels illustrate the idea that emotions are a construct of historically embedded ideas and knowledge about a given context of emotion. For mixed race people, society's inability to *see* them for their wholeness as a person creates a misrecognition of their selfhood. Their feelings therefore must be negotiated to accommodate others.

Nancy Fraser (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) discusses the idea of recognition and its importance in interactions. Using Bourdieu's (1991) concept of symbolic violence and misrecognition, she rejects post- Marxist culturalism, proposing a concept of social justice which seeks to address hierarchical systems of social order, where people are not treated based on their identity, but as a result of common humanity. The shortfall in Fraser's critical theory is her dualism of economy and social justice, without considering the political egalitarianism which must be evident in state to allow real change in society. Axel Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) counters this argument using a Hegelian approach to suffering, borne out the need for recognition. He draws distinctions in social recognition based on love and care in interactions; respect for the Other through equal legal relations; and social esteem

created through community relations. These are put forward as the foundations needed to create self- confidence and self- esteem. If Fraser and Honneth's (2003) paradigms of recognition are to be applied to the emotions which mixed race people must negotiate as a result of the lack of recognition which exist for them, the therapist as a replica of such a society must also be considered.

Rockquemore and Laszloffy's (2003) suggestions for working with black- white mixed race clients, propose a relational – narrative approach to therapy, which helps the client to address the difficulties for them in *choosing* an identity. A comprehensive set of strategies of what the therapist must do to enable elucidation of the client's story is offered. These include externalising the problem; probing for unique outcomes and subjugated stories; expressing curiosity; re- authoring the client's life; expanding the therapeutic conversation; telling the story to an audience that 'bears witness'; strengthening self- validation; and developing strategies of resistance. Although the paper gives a set of structures which a therapist must endeavour to accomplish, the article overlooks discussing the therapist's location in the social embeddedness of race and therapeutic practice. Therefore, if the other- that of society, is included in the client's narrative of misrecognition, the relational component in the room of the other – that of the therapist, is not interrogated in any meaningful way within the model. Theorisation of mixed race counselling in this instance circumvents pre- existing notions of counselling competence. The paper assumes that the client will initiate a discussion of their mixed race without understanding that there may be avoidance by the client regarding bringing the topic into the counselling room to minimise emotional distress. The client's assumption may be that the emotions they experience in trying to negotiate Self will be enacted in the room as a result of the therapists lack of recognition of their mixed race. It is therefore the 'unsaid' by client and therapist that must be engaged with.

The question of why avoidance may take place within the counselling place must be considered. For many, the stigma of mixedness and race can create feelings of shame (Storrs, 1999). Erving Goffman's account (1963) of shame as a *spoiled* identity, emphasises the concealment that takes place by people to overcome social identity difficulties. His book discusses the notion of *passing* which was talked of in early US society, where black or mixed race people could pass for that of white individuals to enable better economic advantages or simply the human right of equality, which they were denied. It is not contested that this justice is fully afforded in the current landscape of modernity. However, it is relevant to point out that 'passing' for mixed race people still may occur on a subliminal level. Goffman (1963) states that *passing* is engaged in as a result of the stigmatised aspects of Self. In the case of mixed race people, their negotiation of emotions may be as a result of the historical, social and familial legacies of shame which have hindered their freedom of *being*. An important point made in this book rests on the motivation to pass. Goffman (1963) suggests that passing is used as a result of the need to experience 'learning how to cope with the way others treat the person he can be shown to be (p.101)'. The shame of being Other is therefore avoided for a period of time, minimising the burden of emotional distress.

The enactment of the unseen client is perpetuated by way of a trajectory of hierarchical structures within society and the therapy room. The mixed race person represses their distress to avoid the anxiety of such power based assertions within the counselling room. Comas- Diaz and Jacobsen (1991) address the issue of avoidance as an ethnocultural transference and countertransference. They state that the client's ethnicity is denied by themselves as a result of the unacknowledged ethnocultural differences within the counselling room. An unconscious promotion of mistrust and suspicion of the therapist ensues within the client, by way of misrecognition. The article attends to the therapist's part within the dynamic

of the therapeutic relationship, and gives a fresh insight into the co- construction of avoidance of mixed race.

Issues surrounding identity choice, passing and avoidance of race, highlights what must be lost and grieved upon if decisions must be made regarding choosing an identity. Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) research on mixed race identity choice support the proposition that society impose this choice. They highlight the 'tragic mulatto' (p.352) stereotype of the mixed race person as being projected onto them by a society which fails to accept the profound reality of multiracialism. The use of the word 'choice' as a variable in their writings, underpin previous work in this field (Rockquemore, 1999; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). However, the phenomenon of *choosing* minimises the polity of colonially embedded counselling discourse. This obfuscates meaningful change for the client, as power in the room remains located in these structures. It is this, which researchers such as Spencer (2004) state must be agitated.

The loss of Self may therefore be re- enacted within the therapeutic space as a result of the therapist's difficulties in engaging with the client's mixed race ontological status. A tension must be held between the counselling theories of Self and the social construction of it, to understand what Self and its relation to the other is, for someone of mixed race heritage. The therapist's over reliance on one over the other may lead clients into an abyss of confusion. Judy Gammelgaard's (2003) paper *Ego, Self and Otherness*, unravels the various approaches to understanding Self from a theoretical perspective. Kierkegaard, Hegel, Freud, Winnicott, Hartmann, Kohut and others are cited for their theorisation of Self. Nikolas Rose (1998) talks about Self as being: "coherent, bounded, individualized, intentional, the locus of thought, action, and belief, the origins of its own actions, and the beneficiary of its unique biography (p. 3)". This thesis assumes the acquiescence of all those perspectives, that Self is

fluid and comprises both inner and outer world experiences. However, the thesis positions itself in a social constructionist paradigm, which aims to observe the influence of society and therapist as participants in this creation. In doing so, it draws on a number of anthropological, sociological and psychoanalytical theories which specifically address social constructionism from a relational perspective. It is these outer world experiences and that of being the Other which demarcate mixed race people.

2.5 Racist Pedagogy of the Unknown and Unseen

Stephen Frosh (2002) discusses this in terms of racism- both within society and the counselling room, and the impact this has on a client's psychic reality of Otherness. Frosh (2002) discusses how the client's Otherness, by its embodied difference, is swamped by violence, oppression and insecurity to such an extent that there is no solace to be found in their psyche. The notion of Otherness is also applied to the therapist and their difficulty in engaging with controversial racism narratives as a result of the Otherness which is embedded within them. The two opposing forces within the counselling space result in a loss of parts of Self for the client. Butler (2003) argues this succinctly, stressing the humanising experience of loss and its grieving aspects. It is here, she states, that the Other can move- on, embarking on a transformation of identity, or if hindered in this pursuit, the 'killing off' of it. Butler uses Klein's (1946) notion of 'splitting off' in her work to describe how the person negotiates society's denial of their ontological status. It is surmised that this splitting is a violent enactment between the therapist and the client that takes place as a result of the person's social experiences (Frosh, 1989).

It is also argued that parts of the mixed race Self are unequivocally linked to the raced parent and their attachment to them (Mukoyama, 1998; Root, 1998; Fatimilehin, 1999;

Mooney, 2008). Maria Root's (1998) bi-racial sibling study posited abundant support for the proposition that parental associations- both positive and negative, were internalised by the mixed race person in how they managed their identity. The therapist's engagement with the familial narrative must therefore accommodate such considerations (Lyles, Yancey, Grace & Carter, 1985), where racism may be within and outside of familial interactions- a unique difficulty imposed on mixed race individuals. Failure to do so may result in the death of the part of the mixed race Self which cannot be tolerated by client and therapist. The mixed race person is located within an unsafe space. Unlike other ethnic minorities- where acculturative practices (Chun, Balls- Organista & Marin, 2002) mean that space within the familial environment is racially homogenous- the mixed race person is faced with a racial negotiation which must take place at **all** times, within **all** settings. To minimise the symbolic loss of parts of the mixed race Self, which must be fragmented and split off, the therapist must initiate a dialogue underpinned by knowledge of racialized concepts and historical underpinnings of subjugation (Mallon, 2004).

In considering race dialogue, it is argued one must consider the reasons for the lack of race talk within the therapy room. Leonardo and Porter (2010) state that a 'pedagogy' of fear exists in society, resulting in colour-blindness. The authors use Fanon and Neate's (1968) *Wretched of the Earth* suppositions, regarding the need for a revolutionary symbolic 'violence', which counteracts the violence of safe race discourse. Leonardo and Porter (2010) also propose a risk discourse in academia, which agitates and promotes contradiction and tension. They state that this is the necessary proliferation which must take place to diffuse dominance laden 'safe' ambiguous discussions. For clients to feel validated and held within the therapeutic space, it is the contentious, risky unsafe aspects of Self that the therapist must immerse themselves and their client in, to enable mutuality.

2.6 Counselling Theory, Rhetoric, and the Post- Race Client

The paradigm shift in counselling in recent years has encompassed a more modernistic scientifically oriented approach to the human being. Evidence of this is seen in post- modern literature regarding ‘psychopathology’ and ‘treatment’ of individuals (Tantum & Van Deurzen, 1998). Yet earlier models of counselling followed what are known as a *three- fold social* consisting of the *spiritual- cultural*, the *economic*, and the *political spheres* (Steiner, 1972, cited House, 1999). It seems that these allowed people to be seen as a whole, as it included macro- level influences, as discussed by Bourdieu (1991), and Fraser and Honneth (2003).

The modernity of counselling theory emphasises the ethical parameters of discussion through the regulatory bodies which govern practice (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy 2002; British Psychological Society, 2011; UK Council for Psychotherapy, 2009). This reaction to understanding psychic suffering may be what minimises nascent contextual themes- such as race- from entering the arena of discussion. Richard House (1999) discusses the overwhelming intrusion of such incursions and the impact this has on the counsellor’s ability to carry out the healing work which is necessary. He states that this zeitgeist is destructive to the human relational qualities of therapeutic work. House (1999) warns against an agenda of therapy which reduces the likelihood of any therapeutic gain for the client. It is the Levinasian concept of the ontological seeing of the Other that is forgotten. Levinas (1961-cited Loewenthal & Snell, 2003) argues about making it our responsibility to put the Other first. It is suggested that Counselling rhetoric- by its very nature, operates inside of ethical codes of conduct, based within constructed models of psychotherapy. The models

operate within what Michel Foucault labels 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1979- cited Taylor, 1984). The therapist's unconscious is contaminated by their model of practice, obscuring and re- packaging the client's narrative into a theoretical category of dysfunction. The Human being's experience is fragmented and re- constructed by the therapist, according to what the therapist's agenda of change may be.

To embrace the conversations which take place in therapy; in this instance that of race and mixed race, therapists must actively engage in controversial subject matter. Cardemil and Battle (2003) highlight that such conversations in therapy may be minimised due to the therapist's own difficulties in thinking about where they position themselves in such emotionally charged issues. They state that by waiting for clients to initiate discussions within the counselling room, they will negate their helping role, as clients may be reluctant to talk about such things due to the biases and prejudices which exist in others. Cardemil and Battle (2003) propose that the therapist must initiate the topic of race to enable a relevant exploration of the client's lived experience. Other studies highlight that openness within the counselling room, in matters of race and racism, will change the dynamic of the therapeutic relationship (Dupont- Joshua, 2006). However, they argue that this must be initiated by developing less Eurocentric training programmes, which incorporate multicultural and multiracialism. This is supported by other theorists (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002) who urge researchers to consider revising theoretical conceptualisations of mixed race. It may be that the therapist's lack of knowledge and skills is a factor in their difficulty in embracing such contentious discussions.

Maria Root's (1990; 1992; 1998; & 2003) seminal works discuss the complex trajectories of mixed race identity development. Her article on 'Other' status (1990) focuses on the importance of including discussions on family, and social- political contexts. She

cautions against assuming that the mixed race person experiences difficulty as a result of their mixedness, and cites findings (Hall, 1990) contrary to this. The client's narrative nevertheless must be considered meaningfully, with an understanding that the therapist must interrogate their own assumptions of *mixed race* per se. These, Root (1990) states, are normally related to racial hierarchies such as the 'one drop' rule. Meaning that the therapist's assumption of the client's physical appearance may not comply with how the mixed race person sees themselves ontologically. It is important to also note that studies (Davis, 1991; Spencer, 1997- cited Mooney 2008) highlight that the black community has so deeply internalised the 'one drop' rule that they have become its primary defenders, creating a pressure for mixed race individuals within the community to choose this singular identity as a result. The exploration of these and other findings must be extrapolated through critical understandings of mixed race identity, first and foremost.

The assumption within most postmodern thinking may be that the family play a role in the client's psychic turmoil (Klein, 1923; Freud, 1952; Rogers, 1957; Beck, 1976). This is supported by mixed race studies which put forward a multitude of research on the familial aspects of mixed race heritage, highlighting important intersectionalities between cultural knowledge and practices within the home (Poston, 1990; Orbe, 1999; Wallace, 2003; Renn, 2004); the influence of siblings (Talbot, 2008); the ethnic status of the parent (Mukoyama, 1998); the influence of both parents within the home (Fatimilehin, 1999); parental attachment influences on the mixed race person's eventual ethnic identity choice (Hall & Turner, 2001); and the inter- relationship between family and psychological adjustment (Chong, 2013). It is these topics which the therapist must acknowledge, alongside the societal factors which further impinge, if they are to offer any profound help to the mixed race client.

A rich tapestry of information exists for therapists to gain a meaningful understanding of their client, yet a propensity to avoid race discussions is cited in many studies (Chang & Berk, 2009). The findings of Chang and Berk's (2009) research suggest a number of critical ingredients of care which are necessary. Amongst these were the therapist's uses of self-disclosure. This was stated as being a bridging factor in perceived social power and power distance within the therapeutic relationship. This supports previous studies (Burkard, Knox, Groen, Perez & Hess, 2006), where the therapist's self-disclosure of their personal history was particularly valuable to clients who had experienced racism and discrimination. This contrasts with traditional psychoanalytic frameworks, where analysts state that it may lead to client gratification (Mallow, 1998). However, modern psychodynamic practice emphasises the importance of using self disclosure to enable mutuality and relationality (Stricker & Fisher, 1990; Aron, 1991; Burke, 1992; Cooper, 1998; Bridges, 2001).

Chang and Berk's (2009) study also proposed the importance of negotiating ruptures within the therapeutic relationship and the influence this has on the dynamic of cross-racial dyads. Although Safran (1993) and others (Keenan, Tsang, Bogo & George, 2005; Richeson & Shelton, 2007) have also noted the importance of ruptures, Chang and Berk's (2009) study highlight the delicacy of cross-racial dyads and the significance of ruptures in-light of this. The delicate unknown of what the client may ponder regarding their therapist's racism, may therefore be diffused, resulting in a more 'real' relationship.

Racial knowledge has also been seen as a determining factor in therapist competence, where clients have considered this as directly associated to treatment success (Constantine, 2002). For therapists, especially Counselling Psychologists- who identify with a pluralistic approach (BPS, 2011) - the racial knowledge necessary to embark on emotive conversations must be conducted from an intersubjective lens, where the therapist must acknowledge their

own racism. It could be considered that to deny such abhorrence is to infantilize the pluralistic, intersubjective essence of therapy.

2.7 Diasporic Paradox: The ‘Other’ Briton on the Couch

The colonial gaze levers its way into psychology by the very language used. Words such as ‘Primitive’ (Freud, 1913, cited Frosh, 2013) conjure Rudyard Kipling (1894) induced visions of the Other. Fanon’s (1952) *Black Skin- White Masks* sheds light on this psychological perspective when discussing colonial interpellation and its drift into the membranes of the modern world. He states that both subject and other are enslaved by either their inferiority or superiority, each alike, and by such situated in their own ‘neurotic orientation (p.60)’. Thus, the unconscious racism which is at play within cross- racial therapy must be interrogated, and questions asked as to whether these underpin the milieu of avoidances and collusion which could take place to ease distress for therapist and client. Intersubjectivity must be approached from this controversial space. Stephen Frosh (2013) argues that the therapist must make a place for the acknowledgment of racism within themselves if they are to own the burden of guilt- laden feelings of historical legacies which promote avoidance. Using Kleinian and Winnicottian theory to make sense of hate and its counterpart love, Neil Altman (2000) also argues that for reparation to take place of racial prejudice, firm foundations should be established between therapist and client, based on the therapist’s acknowledgment of their historically embedded beliefs. To do this a multitude of orientalist views which are embedded within the fabric of *being* in western society must be de-centred. Edward Said’s (1978) elegant formulation of orientalism encapsulates the colonial gaze of the Other. His writings emphasise the importance of history when considering Otherness:

“All knowledge that is about human society, and not about the natural world, is historical knowledge, and therefore rests upon judgment and interpretation. This is not to say that facts or data are non-existent, but that facts get their importance from what is made of them in interpretation... for interpretations depend very much on who the interpreter is, who he or she is addressing, what his or her purpose is, at what historical moment the interpretation takes place (Said, 1981, p.154).”

It may be that unconscious racial anxiety which stems from historical legacies, result in a collaborative avoidance, where each enact a symbolic dance of collusion. For example, studies conducted on cross- racial dyads have shown that the client will adapt to the therapist’s perceived knowledge and skills set (Pope-Davis, Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos, Ligiéro, Brittan-Powell, Liu, W. M. & Liang, 2002) as a defensive action to avoid rejection by their therapist. This is shown to highlight the client’s ability to bridge any dissonance between therapist and client, illustrating the competence they possess in fitting- in to achieve their desired goal of therapeutic change (Chang & Berk, 2009). The question which emerges is whether this unconscious collusion results in meaningful change for the person, in terms of their raced selfhood.

The issue of trust also resonates as a confounding factor within intersubjectivity. Scholars discuss trust as being a foundational element of intersubjectivity (Benjamin, 1990; 2004; Ogden, 2004; Markova & Gillespie, 2008; Seemann, 2009). James Jones (1991) raises the concept of credibility in therapy and the race – effects which threaten to undermine it. Jones (1991) explains this by drawing attention to the fact that same- race client- therapist dyads do not lead to automatic credibility as race is a heightened contentious issue by right of its subject matter. He proposes that discussions surrounding race and trust must be engaged

with at the early stages of therapy to enable change - regardless of race sameness/ difference dyads.

The collusion which can take place in therapy may result in a *disappearance* of the Other. Thus the colonization of Other is conducted by the client themselves, similar to the status quo of what enacts in the outside world. Frosh (1989) and Benjamin (1998) argue that this disappearance contributes to the minimising of mutuality. Here, it is proposed that misrecognition is produced through the similarity- difference aggregates of subjectivity, in which neither is collapsed into the other (Frosh & Baraitser, 2003) and fully examined. Other scholars also pay attention to the lack of integration between psychology and racial contexts, stating that theories place a western stamp on understanding difference (Said, 2003). An important avenue for pondering is the impact of collusion on the client. Shih and Sanchez' (2005) illuminating research regarding the lack of empirically based studies on multiple racial identities- concluded that the difficulties that mixed race people face are engendered via misrecognition. Shih and Sanchez (2009) also highlight the intersectional nature of mixed race and how this is further overlooked due to the mixed race person's embodiment of mixedness. Hitherto the studies put forward within this thesis, it could be assumed that collusion within the client- therapist dyad may in itself contribute and reinforce the distress which is experienced in the outside world. This negates the aims of therapy vis- a- vie all models, and furthermore contradicts the ethical parameters that therapy is politicked by. Onel Brookes (2012) argues for therapists to observe carefully how race is theorised. His paper proposes that a tension be held between how race is considered from a framework of existing ideas, and that of not considering any. Brookes (2012) surmises that this creates a dangerous terrain, where naïve truth or racial ignorance result in a repetition and re-enactment of racism. Therefore if collusion is to be considered meaningfully, there must be an understanding that

misrecognition may also be enacted through the paradox of theoretical assumptions and insufficient knowledge.

Intergroup bias (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) is shown to impact on all manner of interactions and expressions of belonging. The concept of collusion is put forward as being a by-product of this desire to belong and minimise feelings of Otherness. Studies show that bias is experienced through biased language use, resulting in fear and lowered self-esteem (Maass, Salvi, Arcuri & Semin, 1989). Mixed race people are- by reason of their ambiguous appearance, located in the abyss of linguistic categorisation. Research highlights their sensitivity and heightened awareness of this (Rockquemore, 1999). This may undoubtedly lead to a need to collude, both outside and within therapy, as stressful interactions are minimised, where an explanation of their Otherness might have to be expanded on.

The search for the refuge of belonging is barren in a homogenous society of monoracialism for clients of mixed race heritage. Miri Song (2010a) questions the idea of 'mixed race' as a stable construct in terms of grouping, advocating society to understand the complex nature of mixed race and its uniqueness of heterogeneity. However, the antecedent to this is the racial stereotyping, which mixed race people have a heightened awareness of. It is here that the client finds themselves located, prior to any exploration of heterogeneity. It is suggested within this study, for therapists to wrestle with the minutiae of trajectories of mixed race, they must dislocate themselves from societal legacies of difference and join the experience of Otherness via their own personal therapy. The biases and anxieties which exist within them may then be explored in a safer space, different to that of their role as a therapist.

Psycho- social studies have focused on the issue of avoidance within black- white interactions within the US (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002; Richeson & Trawalter,

2005, Dixon, 2006). Although the anxiety laden histories of slavery in the US may be less relevant for Britain, the black- white dyad nevertheless results in orientalist avoidant mechanisms of exchange, to minimise stress for both. There exists a need for clearly defined social scripts which include relevant knowledge of topics regarding identity and race. This is cited by scholars (Avery, Richeson, Hebl, & Ambady, 2009) as a way forward in mediating power and anxiety within client – therapist interactions.

‘Otherness’ as a concept has been explored within this thesis as creating disjunctures in counselling, as a result of Eurocentric understandings of difference. The colourblindness which seeps into therapy may be as a result of the consequences of counsellor training and the projection onto the Other as dysfunctional (Treacher 2005). Homi Bhabha (1994) distinguishes Otherness from a set of ideas which reiterate deeply stemmed colonial ‘mimicry’. He describes vernacular cosmopolitans who move between cultural traditions, sustaining hybrid forms of life that do not have any prior existence within a single culture or language. Bhabha’s (1994) description displays some similarities to Bourdieu’s (1991) concept of having no social capital. It also fits seamlessly into how mixed race people are situated within society. The therapeutic space must therefore become the ‘third’ space, which Bhabha (1994) argues Otherness is located in. Roy Moodley (2007) describes the not ‘seeing’ of the Other as a hegemonic practice, sustained through representations of patriarchal terror, such as racism. He puts forward 3 strategies for ensuring recognition of marginalised voices. The most pertinent to this thesis is the inclusion of a ‘white’ category in multi- cultural counselling. This rarefied aspect of multiculturalism is yet to be fully discussed in counselling, and integrates the apartheid of multiculturalism which has created a positive discrimination toward people of colour. For mixed race clients who may *pass* in the world as ‘white’, their Otherness can be acknowledged and counted, regardless of colour.

For mixed race people to hold the burden of the others colorblindness, they must first contemplate the confusion this creates for them. Barn and Harnam (2005) raise this issue in their paper, stating that the identity crisis mixed race children may encounter is triggered by the confusion of how others perceive them. Citing issues of racism and suspicion from both outside and within their own extended families, their findings show that the constant facing of these anxious situations, results in a propensity to feel confused and hurt. Society's difficulty in recognising mixed race people may also obfuscate their own recognition or understanding of Self. Discussing other aspects of Self may be a coping mechanism to avoid embarking on a more complex subject, such as their mixed race (Sinclair & Hai, 2002). However the intersectional aspects of Self mean that their racialized embodiment may be relevant to the discussion. For therapists, this means gaining an understanding of these intersectional qualities when discussing difference. Erica Burman's (2003) paper describes the legitimacy of intersectionality in race conversations. She urges therapists to take an intersectional approach to embarking on race within the therapeutic space, thus giving race the space it needs to emerge within the client's narrative. Like others (Brah, 1996; Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006), Burman takes an anti-racist feminist approach to critiquing the hegemonic manner in which counsellors engage with 'difference' discourses. This useful paper facilitates the turn toward a meaningful approach to understanding the mixed race Self, from a more egalitarian positioning by the therapist. Mediating notions of power in client-therapist relationships means that the burden of colourblindness may be relinquished somewhat.

Taking the responsibility to discuss mixed race may be also be motivated by ensuring the therapeutic relationship stays intact. Studies highlight the heightened relational nature of mixed race identity development and the many trajectories of inter-relating which mixed race children develop from an early age (Root, 1998; Mukoyama, 1998; Hall & Turner, 2001;

Shih, Bonham, Sanchez & Peck, 2007). It becomes clear that a relational approach to therapy (Boston Change Process Study Group, 1998) could benefit these clients. Using countertransferential knowledge to gain an understanding of the client's narrative, the therapist is allowed to experience the mixed race person's lived experience from an enacted presence within the therapeutic place. Incorporating an intersectional and relational approach to therapy thus helps to reconcile the race anxiety which precludes discussions.

2.8 Being British in the Albion

For many mixed race people in Britain, their mixedness is only recently gaining the social capital needed. This is described by Minelle Mahtani (Mahtani & Moreno 2001), who discusses the racism her parents encountered in Britain in 1971 as a result of their mixed relationship, leading them to emigrate to Canada. Although her mixedness was more accepted in Canada, she continued to experience isolation at the hands of her extended family group. This highlights previous research conducted on mixed race, as cited within this thesis (Mukoyama, 1998; Root, 1998; Fatimilehin, 1999; Mooney, 2008). However, the lack of heterogeneity of mixedness also further confounds the other's acceptance of them. For Mahtani and Moreno (2001) the absence of whiteness meant that they were renounced of their right to mixed race heritage. Loneliness and suffering for mixed race people, is within itself, difficult to conceptualise due to the number of variables involved. However, physical appearance plays a key role in the subjugation of belonging to the mixed category. Mahtani's (2001) observation of mixed race women in Britain, suggests that they can and will transcend racial borders with fluidity, to enable the social privileges of a given race. It is argued that this skill is borne out of the loneliness they experience if they exist within the demarcations of a *one choice of race* rule. Their appearance and emotional resilience (Twine, 1996) enable them a rite of passage across racial borders.

Previous research conducted in Britain has highlighted social constructionist influences on mixed race identity development (Wilson, 1987; Christian, 2000; Song, 2010a). These studies discuss the pressure the mixed race person continuously experiences to find a space to belong. These are reinforced through negative experiences during their childhood whilst in school settings (Renn, 2004; Tickly, Caballero, Haynes & Hill, 2004; Shih & Sanchez, 2005; Phillips, 2008), where they encounter displacement at the hands of others. The repudiation of their mixedness results in feelings of loneliness and suffering. Binning, Unzueta, Huo and Molina's (2009) paper on high school students in the US, state that the loneliness mixed race people experience, impacts on their psychological wellbeing. They propose that for mixed race people to maintain a sense of Self, they must be encouraged to explore and accept their multiracial status. Rather than being caught between two worlds, as experienced in their childhood, they must be helped to cognitively integrate their multiple identities and find compatibility between their different racial heritages (Binning, Unzueta et al, 2009).

The use of mixed race identity measures (Cheng & Lee, 2009) have highlighted that integration of disparate heritages can be achieved by a process where mixed race people are encouraged to recall positive experiences of being mixed race. A question arises regarding the therapist's own process in undertaking this task. Caution is necessary as to how therapists may operationalize mixed race. Their own beliefs regarding what constitutes mixed race must be explored, i.e. the assumption that it must include a white category (Song & Hashem, 2010). The experiences which form these beliefs must also be engaged with, thus creating an understanding for the therapist of why they are positioned within a particular racial discourse. Controversial, yet fundamental questions must be internally explored by therapists if they are to challenge clients on their own belief systems, and therefore facilitate change.

An existential anxiety exists for mixed race people regarding their ontological status. However, a post-structuralist gaze must be taken to understand the phenomenology of the therapeutic dyad. The Foucauldian understanding, that universal concepts in western philosophy may have a historical phenomenon (Taylor, 1984) must be analysed. Taylor and Nanney (2011) state that therapists must explore existential themes with mixed race clients if they are to minimise the guilt they feel when wanting to identify with one parent's ethnicity. The authors also highlight that if this is not attended to, the non – integrated parts of the Self will be 'split off', resulting in the closing of what Heidegger (1927- cited Taylor & Nanney, 2011) called one's *Dasein*, or openness to being in the world. This intra- psychic phenomenon Taylor and Nanney (2011) speak of will lead to feelings of isolation, unless grappled with during the therapeutic encounter.

Finally, for many, choosing a national identity was the single factor which enabled them to feel a sense of belonging to their community. Research conducted in New Zealand on people of mixed Chinese and European descent (Rocha, 2012), showed that the narratives of mixed race identity were both enabled and constrained through dislocation, discrimination, exclusion and questioning by others. Their only salvation was that of citizenship, achieved through the ownership of a singular national or regional identity.

The use of a national identity could be considered a less emotionally inflammatory experience than finding a metaphorical place to belong. The ascribed social order of racial hierarchy displaces the individual. What they experience is that of alienation. However, the question of the *alien- nation* (Gilroy, 2004) must also be considered, as it is relevant to this 'split' debate of being and beings in a dichotomous society of either/ or. Frank Furedi's (2001) discussion on the reasons behind society's need to alienate the mixed race person is indicated as being rooted historically in hegemonic fear. Early US theorists such as Robert Park (1928), needed to place the mixed race person in a diasporic space, where their image

embodies moral dubiousness, sexualisation, spiritual instability, and turmoil. This early ghettoization of mixed race, as illustrated within this thesis, has left residues of stigma, shame and distress. The mixed race client, in a culture of modernity, is still left struggling with historically embedded marginalisation by others. Paul Gilroy (2003) gives an eloquent summation of the demonization of mixedness in modern day Britain. Using Richard Reid's attempted shoe bombing of American Airlines flight 63, Gilroy (2003) argues that the focus on Reid's mixed heritage highlights Britain's new racism; '*Not now, is society fearful of difference, but of that of the 'half different and partially familiar* (p.14)'. This, he states, conjures notions of de- civilisation and bleached- out pure cultures. For mixed race people, the alienation they feel may be that of society's difficulty in finding a place to *locate* them. Gilroy (2004) states the 'alien' must be the enemy, to follow the ordering principles by which national states conjure a deference to them. Therefore, the *mixed* person must be made the *alien* and *enemy*, to fit into a social order.

The therapist's role in understanding alienation emerges as pivotal within the debate. Hegel's (Laruelle, 2010) idea of acknowledgement of the universal as being necessary to embark on individuality, may offer an insight into the space in which mixed race clients feel they are located, as well as the type of therapeutic conversations which must be initiated. It is proposed that the mixed race person's cosmopolitanism cannot be felt in a meaningful way, unless their individuality is located, both within and outside of them. Butler's (1996) 'injurious speech' and Fanon's (1952), 'Look, a Negro!' both highlight the linguistic assault on the Other. For mixed race people these narratives must be extrapolated from the unconscious, and brought into the counselling room.

Symbolic Interactionist Charles Horton Cooley's (1902) statement "*Each to each a looking-glass, reflects the other that doth pass* (p.184)," encapsulates the essence of alienation and social order, which mixed race people speak of. Julie Matthews (2007), in her paper on

Eurasian performativity and cosmopolitanism supports this, stating that mixed race people are viewed in disparate ways, where the performative aspect of mixed race is continuously observed and assaulted, making it difficult for them to reconcile selfhood. Thus, the visual and linguistic discourses which mixed race people must yield to, violate them also. The therapist's reading of the mixed race person therefore must encompass this understanding. Pedrotti, Edwards and Lopez' (2008) paper suggests strategies to mediate the effects of alienation that clients experience in the world. They suggest a solution- focused approach to therapy, where clients are encouraged to discuss experiences of alienation and find strengths and possibilities to help them overcome the other's negative perceptions of them. Pedrotti and colleagues (2008) propose that these strategies must involve asking coping questions from the client regarding experiences which made them feel empowered about their ability to fit into social norms. A weakness in this research pertains to the assumption that social norms are concrete. This minimises any discussion around power or social order. Also, it does not address the intersubjective aspects of trust and mutuality which must be foundations to change. However, if utilised with other more interactionist and intersubjective viewpoints, these strategies may help the client to initiate an optimistic outlook of what is possible through therapy.

The mixed race person's journey in negotiating Self crosses terrains of marginalisation, racism, relatedness and belonging. The performative embodied role which is projected onto mixed race people by society mean that choices are limited or forced. Throughout their story, the chameleon qualities of adaptation play out in all given contexts. What emerges is their need to adopt multiple labels to allow them freedom in *being*. Research conducted on college students by Miville, Constantine, Baysden and Lloyd (2005), support this proposition, stating that mixed race people will simultaneously use monoracial and multiracial labels to self – identify. The authors conclude that the participants' physical

ambiguity meant that they used more universal labels when desired, to fit into a given context. Their life- long interaction of being questioned by others meant that using multiple labels allowed a buffering against racism and categorisation. Miville, Constantine et al's (2005) study also state that positive socialisation experiences helped mixed race people to build the skills necessary to situate themselves within a more universal understanding of Self, supporting previous findings (Poston, 1990; Root; 1998; Miville, 2005).

The mixed race person is Othered by family, society and the therapist. The journey includes circumvention of parts of the Self which elicit shame and avoidance. In doing so, a way of coping, may be to utilize a more global perspective of Otherness. David Brunsma's (2005) work on mixed race children and their families, noted that parents were more inclined to categorise their children as 'white' if the multiracial category was not available, affirming the power based legacies of 'pigmentized hierarchy (p. 4)'. The results also showed a correlation with class and gender of the parent. This calls to question whether the mixed race person's propensity to steer away from stigma by using more universal labelling, may have been influenced by early parental or attachment factors, i.e the race or gender of the parent. The move away from minority status as cited by Brunsma (2005), illustrates the avoidance of distress, which parents initiate as a way of coping for their children.

The move to a global labelling has been articulated by British writers of mixed race research (Back, 1996; Alibhai- Brown, 2001; Aspinall, 2003; Twine, 2004). Their findings support studies conducted in the US, which showed a transcendent identity was considered the ideal (Mahtani, 2002; Root, 1992; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Zack, 2010). Song's (2010b) findings show that young mixed race people prefer to conceptualise their identity in national or regional terms such as 'Londoner' or 'British'. This was also dependent on their physical indeterminacy and their multi-ethnic location within London. An important aspect of the paper pertains to the finding that although mixed race people endeavour to move away

from the narrow labels of racial categorisation, they continue to be embedded in racial discourses in their everyday lives. The participants in Song's (2010a) study stated that they did not want to negate their racial heritage, but encompass it within their national or regional identity status.

Being both defined and undefined racially is seen to be the ideal for mixed race people, supporting Bhabha's (1994) proposition of Otherness. The difference they experience is carried in such a way that it allows them freedom to choose an embodied status, if they so wish. However, what emerges is the Derridian (Derrida, 1978) understanding of difference as an acceptable way of existing. Therefore, it is vital that therapists acknowledge that difference must be enabled, and that universalism must be explored and challenged within the therapeutic encounter. Del Loewenthal's (2003) paper highlights the importance of enabling difference within the counselling room, stating that the therapist's theoretical approach and values can become ossified and compartmentalised when threatened. He advocates the metaphorical welcoming of the 'stranger' into the room by way of the interpretations which take place. It is this recognition of 'difference', 'sameness' and 'universality' that the mixed race client may need to enable growth of Self.

This chapter critically reviews the historical journey of mixed race from its early subjugated beginnings, through a turbulence of racial episteme, eventually putting forward the idea that mixed race identity is embedded in social constructionist paradigms. The situational nature of this within the counsellor- therapist dyad is critiqued from a paradoxical space of belonging and *non- belonging*. Although the literature within this thesis puts forward a case for understanding the construct of mixed race in a meaningful way, there is a dearth of research within the therapeutic field. The following section, in light of this, puts forward a methodology which seeks to explore the unexplored.

Methodology and Method

3.1 Methodological Considerations

Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were considered to answer the research questions. Quantitative methods assume the ontological and epistemological basis of enquiry to be an explication of objective realisms of the phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This takes a reductionist, positivist positioning to what is being observed. The nature of this study takes both a symbolic interactionist and social constructivist viewpoint, lending itself to a qualitative paradigm, where ontology is seen as relativist and experiential. Epistemology and ontology are therefore seen as merging paradigms, where knowledge is created through the investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The objective of qualitative enquiry is to: “...*stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. They seek answers to questions which stress how social experience is created and given meaning* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 13)”. This relativist approach facilitates an in-depth interrogation of the complex identity processes which need to be managed by mixed race clients within the counselling room, whilst acknowledging the researcher’s own positioning within the process.

Researcher bias is commonly put forward as a weakness of qualitative methods. Proponents of the scientific enquiry approach to investigation suggest that qualitative methodologies are contaminated by researcher bias throughout all stages of the conducted

study (Cresswell, 2009; Yeh & Inman, 2007). An acknowledgement of the researcher as being an active participant within the research offers a transparent and subjective stance to the process of this investigation (Goulding, 1998; Yeh & Inman, 2007). Furthermore, this transparency illuminates the intimate relationship between researcher and what is being observed, and how the findings are shaped by this relationship. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Elucidating bias is fundamental to qualitative research, due to its value laden nature (West, 2001). It is these values which enable an empathic understanding by the researcher of the participants' stories, enabling a compassionate insight into what is being observed (Moustakas, 1990). This reflects Counselling Psychology's core relational and pluralistic principles (Division of Counselling Psychology, 2005). These principles are grounded in the following ethical framework of competent practice:

- to engage with subjectivity and intersubjectivity, values and beliefs
- to know empathically and to respect first person accounts as valid in their own terms;
to elucidate, interpret and negotiate between perceptions and world views but not to
assume the automatic superiority of any one way of experiencing, feeling, valuing and
knowing
- to be practice led, with a research base grounded in professional practice values as
well as professional artistry

- to recognise social contexts and discrimination and to work always in ways that empower rather than control and also demonstrate the high standard of anti-discriminatory practice appropriate to the pluralistic nature of society today.

(Division of Counselling Psychology, BPS, 2005)

3.1.1 Reflexive Awareness: The Researcher's positioning Within the Study

The study emerged as a result of a long interest in identity. Having grappled with the 'where are you from?' question during childhood, adolescence and adulthood whilst growing up in London, society's questioning could either be in the form of 'interest' or hostility. The questioning became more apparent if I was with my mother, who was light skinned. Nevertheless, my embodied status was *seen* foremost. This often elicited my own questioning of my 'Self'. My heritage, explained as a Sri- Lankan born, London raised woman, needed to be thought about. Within it was a corpus of colonial 'blood mixing'. Always under the umbrella of national identity- stories regarding my Dutch, Portuguese, Tamil, and Singhalese mix were common conversations within the home. Surnames signified family members and their ancestors, with a social hierarchy in order of the oldest Singhalese surnames or lightest skinned.

Having my own children (of mixed race heritage) unconsciously continued the journey of finding a 'post-race' (Ali, 2003) way of being. The interest in identity- in embryonic form at this stage- was lit again as a young mother, when I was faced with questions regarding the difference in my child's colouring to mine. Again, either disgust or interest was received and absorbed. The challenges of being mixed, be it through long gone colonial legacies of my heritage, or that of the mixedness of what appears to others as not

fitting in- that of myself, my husband and my children's differences in colour, continue in the present day. What appears to encapsulate identity, are the multitude of different belief systems and social interactions which underlie how one forms Self. These are shown to be immersed in a social context, and constructed as a result of this context.

My research interests have therefore focused on the influence of social interactions in understanding mixed race identity (Mooney, 2008; Mooney 2009). The current research takes up the interest within the counselling framework, examining how the role of mixed race is managed within the therapy room. Following the pluralistic ethos, where the dyadic relationship is co- constructed through the lens of difference in the room (Downing, 2004), this study explores these junctures and disjunctures.

3.2 Qualitative Methodology

A number of qualitative methodologies were considered to answer the research question. The use of Discourse Analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) was considered at most length. Its constructivist foundations could be deemed to be applicable to the study phenomenon. A discursive observation however focuses on the linguistic emphasis of social construction. This assumes an *a priori*; that language over time and social change, inform identity (Plummer, 1981). The present study seeks to understand how an embodied identity is *managed* in the social world, which includes the counselling room. This explores a different perspective of identity for the mixed race person. The management of existential 'being' and the influence of the 'Other' in this encounter is what is being investigated.

This aims and objectives of the proposed study lend itself to a grounded theory methodology, as they are concerned with the social, interactionist aspects of the experience,

without prior theoretical assumptions. Grounded theory as a concept (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) enables the exploration of how a phenomenon is managed or constructed where theoretical explanations may also be lacking. The data is not observed with any expectation of fitting into a deduced theory or hypotheses, but viewed in an original way enabling the key themes to emerge through early analysis of the original data (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Grounded theorists Glaser and Strauss (1967) used the constant comparative method of both data gathering and analysis. This proposes that data gathering and analysis are carried out simultaneously, advancing toward a theoretical concept of the subject being studied. This can then be used to direct and streamline the way in which further data collection can be approached. The theory evolves through systematic collection and analysis. Memo writing or reflexive Aide Memoires are stated as being integral to the philosophy of theory production, with literature reviews conducted post- analysis to ensure legitimate sensitivity to the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1978).

3.2.1 Critiquing Traditional Grounded Theory and the Turn to Constructivist Grounded Theory

Critiques of traditional grounded theory methods state that Glaser and Strauss' (1967) proposal of the researcher as the *tabular rasa* or 'blank slate', are a naive endeavour (Clarke, 2005). Although these debates acknowledge that the approach is inductive, with no preconceived questions to prove or disprove, they argue that it does not mean that the findings are a pre-existing reality (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Strauss (1987) took a more discerning view of past positivist beliefs held by Glaser (1978), and from this a more constructivist approach emerged. This permutation took a more relativist- ontological position where "... truth is enacted" (Strass & Corbin, 1994, p279). Although differing critiques exist (Annells, 1996, 1997) regarding the exact ontological nature of Strauss and

Corbin's (1994) approach, the principle of the approach is that of relativism. Here, *"theories are embedded 'in history'- historical epochs, era and moments are to be taken into account in the creation, judgement, revision and reformulation of theories"* (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p.280). However, Strauss and Corbin's (1998) work appears to be a middle ground between traditional grounded theory and a more constructivist position. Their ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist approach still maintain an element of external reality, which assumes objectivity.

Kathy Charmaz (2000), the leading proponent of constructivist grounded theory, rejects these notions. Charmaz (2000) explains that implicit meanings about values, beliefs, and ideologies must be analysed beyond surface value. Here, the interaction between the researcher and participant produces the data (Charmaz, 1995). The researcher- as co-producer, enriches the data by adding "... a description of the situation, the interaction, the person's affect and (their) perception of how the interview went" (Charmaz, 1995., p. 33). Charmaz (1995) explains that this is conducted through ensuring that the coding procedure facilitates the researcher's emersion in the data. Using raw data within the memos are proposed as a way of keeping participants voices 'alive' (Charmaz, 2001). The researcher's ponderings, witnessing and self- reflections are simultaneously entwined into the coding, allowing the mood of the interview to be extracted (Charmaz & Mitchell, 1996). It is important to note that a delicate balance exists between the participant's voice and the researcher's perception of the narrative. This must be transparent and distinguishable, enabling the reader to make connections between the analysis and the original data (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002).

The quest for suitable qualitative methods for this study, culminated in the use of Charmaz' (2006) version of grounded theory as a means of achieving the research aims. The research question needed an approach which facilitated a symbolic interactionist

methodology, and where the information was 'grounded' in the data. The study focuses on the processes of what is happening- and the underlying meaning of these processes, whilst allowing for the possibility that the past informs the present. This gives a representation of the social world from the subjective gaze of the researcher, and fits with a methodological approach which explicitly sets out to do this. Charmaz' (2006) symbolic interactionist perspective serves as a way to learn about the worlds we are observing, whilst understanding that what may be emerging as a theory to understand them is driven and constructed from past and present interactions. It proposes that the research participants' meanings, views and experiences- together with the finished grounded theories, are not an exact picture of the studied world, but are constructions of reality (Charmaz, 2006).

The uniqueness of this study is in its open investigation of identity management within therapy, without preconceived notions within the discourse (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), or analysed meanings, resulting in objective truths (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Method

3.3 Research Design

Using a constructivist grounded theory method (Charmaz, 2002, 2006), intensive semi – structured interviews (Atkinson, 1998) were conducted allowing the researcher to invite a detailed discussion of the questions being asked. The nature of the intensive interview assumes that the researcher is seeking to understand the topic, whilst the participant has the necessary knowledge to shed light on it (Fontana & Frey, 1994). The intensive interview also offers a method of enquiry which is sensitive to what is being said, as well as what is being intimated.

The initial questions were devised based on the aims of the research, and thus helped to uncover the processes, meanings and intentions within the therapy dyad. A set of open-ended questions were used within the pilot, which were sufficiently detailed to ensure that the participant's emotional wellbeing was considered, in respect of the questions being asked from them. However, the questions were open enough to enable the participant to freely discuss their thoughts and experiences- whilst allowing the researcher to examine meaning, and how the participant was constructing their role (Kvale, 1996). Most of the questions explored the process of psychotherapy, and therefore were structured in such a way that enabled a safe exploration of the subject matter (Rennie, 1996). Each subsequent set of research questions was developed with the previous emergent themes in mind, thus speeding the process of discovery and gaining a focus on the data.

3.4 Participant Sampling

3.4.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The study proposed the use of participants who either had been, or were currently in counselling. Participants were chosen who had previously had a minimum of 6 sessions. Most of the participants had been in long term counselling. Participants with a medical diagnosis of mental health issues were excluded for ethical reasons (Munhall, 2001). The criteria stipulated that engagement of previous counselling had to be within a 3 year period- this allowed a clear reflection of the interview question.

Both trainee therapists (in their role as a client in therapy) and lay participants were sought, facilitating a variation of client perspectives. The lay participants were interwoven with trainee counsellors in the chronology of interviews, in- line with theoretical sampling and heterogeneity that is needed in constructivist grounded theory. This balanced the data gathering by alternating more elaborative questioning of themes, with minimal distress to participants. Lay participants were used to facilitate a purer client perspective. However, trainee counsellors were used for their skill in being able to reflect deeply over dyadic processes, and identity management in relation to this. This follows the pluralistic underpinnings of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), and takes into consideration ethical factors- such as interpersonal processes, when interviewing over an extended period of time (Haverkamp, 2005).

Participants were chosen between 21- 60 years of age, using purposeful and theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2001; Flick, 2011). In medium sized samples, as used in this study, purposeful sampling is suggested at the early stages of the study (Charmaz, 2000; Cutcliffe, 2000) to elucidate rich data. This study used purposeful sampling for the pilot interview and the 1st participant. The age criterion was chosen in the hope of creating an

insight into a mixed race person's social world across several eras, giving a more coherent perspective of this group. As the interviews progressed, theoretical sensitivity was applied to the age, racial mix, lay/ counsellor client, and parent's race of the participants to explore themes across these areas. The average age of the participants was 31 years. The study used solely females due to the fact that only females responded to the posters. This is addressed in the Conclusion section. However, participants were sampled from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, with no exclusion in mixed heritage. Their subjective labelling of being 'mixed race' formed the inclusion criteria. Participants were chosen who were of British citizenship. This helped to ensure the study gave a British perspective of mixed race identity. The final sample utilised participants relevant to the evolving saturation of data (discussed within the procedure section)

3.5 Materials

3.5.1. Interview Protocol formulation

Open- ended interview questions (Atkinson, 1998) were formulated to form the base of the interview. These questions were loaded toward the main aims of the study, and thus helped to extract data which answered the research question. To ensure the reliability of interview questions, research suggests that they be formulated after experience has been gained in conducting previous grounded theory interviews (Fassinger, 2005). The interview protocol (Appendix 1) was developed as a result of background reading of the study phenomena, as well as the researcher's prior experience in conducting mixed race identity research using grounded theory. The protocol consisted of questions which spanned a number of different areas relating to the participant's identity, and experience of being in counselling. These questions also included prompts to help clarify the question. However, the protocol did not assume that the participant should have a sophisticated understanding of therapeutic processes, but more relevant, that they can consider how they experienced their therapy and

their therapist. The questions did assume that clients would have the most comprehensive understanding of *their* own process. Although the questions hoped to uncover how mixed race clients experience therapy, and how they manage and construct their role within the counselling room, it was also important to ask questions regarding their lived experience, as these are relevant to therapy.

In keeping with the tenets of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2001), the questions were kept open ended, allowing for micro- questioning of emergent themes from the previous interview. Charmaz (2006) asks the researcher to carefully consider how the interview questions are formulated. A checklist of considerations include: questioning whether the data will reveal what lies beneath the surface; if multiple views will be extracted of the participants' range of actions; if the data will enable analytic categories, how comparisons can be generated and inform ideas; if the data will portray a full range of contexts (Charmaz, 2006).

The completed protocol (Appendix 1) used opening questions regarding early life to help the participant to think about the context of their lived experience. Intermediate questions focused on the counselling process, and where/ how identity emerged within this. The ending questions allowed the interview to close the interview safely, by asking such things as what the participant would like from counselling in the future? All questions were formulated with prompts to ensure richness in data gathering. The full interview protocol was used within the Pilot Study after ethical approval was sought.

3.5.2 Demographic information and De- brief Leaflet

Participants were provided with an information sheet (Appendix 2) which introduced the study and relevant interview information. Demographic information was collected which asked questions regarding the participant's occupation, religion, duration of counselling, and

the participant's parents ethnicities (Appendix 3). An informed consent sheet was provided which addressed confidentiality, anonymity, recording/ data storage information, participant code, and knowledge of the right to withdraw.

To ensure that the participant's emotional, physical and psychological health was protected, a support sheet was developed (Appendix 4). This detailed low cost counselling services, organisations- and forums for people of mixed race heritage. Information reiterating the de- brief process was included within this information, and given at the end of each interview. This included contact details for the researcher and her supervisors.

3.5.3 Recording and Transcribing Materials

A digital recording device was used to tape the interviews. The interviews were transferred to a PC. The WMA files were stored securely on the PC, and accessed for the purpose of journaling and transcribing.

A digital foot pedal and compatible software (Express Scribe Pro) was used during the typing of the interviews to facilitate faster transcription.

3.5.4 Aide Memoire/ Memo Notes

A diary was used throughout the research process. Themes were noted immediately after each interview, alongside reflexive thoughts of the anonymised participant's interview information. The diary was also used for the purpose of journaling, and for thoughts and ideas regarding the literature review. It was also used to theoretically sample feedback comments and email correspondence from the participants. This was part of the iterative process of analysis, and aided rigor when checking if the emergent themes married with the immediate post- interview reflections.

3.6 Procedure

3.6.1 Recruiting participants

An advertising poster (Appendix 5) was created and used to recruit participants. Requests were made for the poster to be added as a link to *Facebook* contacts, as well on the mixed race group forums on *Facebook*. Student Unions were approached and asked to place a poster on their noticeboards. Requests were also made via other mixed race discussion forums and websites such as 'intermix' (<http://www.intermix.org.uk>). The resident counsellor for the website was also corresponded with and sent a poster via email to give to their clients. Posters were also sent to the main London Universities and F E Colleges, to be sent to all students within the counselling and psychology departments. Posters were also placed in the waiting areas of student counselling rooms.

3.6.2 Quality of Participant Sample

8 participants who classified as mixed race met the theoretical criteria as the data emerged. These were a mixture of trainees and lay people who had seen the advertising poster in their college, work place and on the *Facebook* mixed race groups page. Using this number of participants ensured the data was not over quantified, but also adequately represented a diverse range of ethnic mixes. This corresponds with grounded theory research within counselling psychology at present, where dissertation and research projects have used between 6- 12 participants (Winning, 2010; Athanasiadou, 2011; Duan, Nilsson, Wang, Debernardi, Kleven, & Tallent, 2011). However, this study interviewed participants for 1 ½ to 2 ½ hours, producing a detailed insight into the research question. Charmaz' (2006) approach posits a need for deep sustained data gathering to ensure richness. She asks the researcher to consider a design which provides a detailed exploration of the question, and proposes that the quality and depth of the interview is a better gauge of reliability, than a

surface exploration with a larger sample. The study therefore focused on the length of time given to each emergent theme as the interviews progressed. Also, the theoretical sampling sought participants with different skin colouring, age, lay client/ trainee counsellor clients, ethnic mixes, gendered ethnic parent, and regions of upbringing, in order of the emergent themes (demographic table, Appendix 20).

The researcher gave the participants the opportunity to contact her via email or phone, if any further thoughts arose. These were added to the researchers Aide Memoire and used during the analytic process. Using 8 participants over an extended length of interview time ensured a comprehensive explication of the research question, and enabled the researcher's aims. To ensure heterogeneity of mixed race, participants were sampled with theoretical sensitivity to their geographic locations, enabling an observation of different regional British Perspectives. However, the final sample, all currently resided in London. This allowed an understanding of contextual factors over their lifetime, whilst allowing a comparison between that, and their current residence in an ethnically diverse area

Using an even balance of trainee counselling clients and lay clients enabled a deeper investigation of the phenomena and enabled further heterogeneity of the sample. Using clients, who are / have been in medium term to long term therapy, increased the possibility that topics around Self or identity may have been discussed. Also, clients currently in therapy would have the opportunity to work through any distress or further thoughts which could arise as a result of the interview. The participants were given information (de- brief sheet) regarding access to further counselling, if issues arose as a result of the interview.

Unique to traditional grounded theory approaches (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is Charmaz' (2006) concept of rapport building which precedes any interview or observation. With this in mind, participants whom the researcher had interviewed for previous studies were also approached. Participant collection was also open to snowball sampling through

onward referral. This hoped to facilitate a more meaningful participant- researcher rapport. One participant was chosen through snowball sampling, who also met the theoretical sampling as the results emerged. Charmaz (2006) describes rapport building as an integral aspect of data gathering- in contrast to Glaser & Strauss' (1967) 'smash and grab' data collection (Dey, 1999). Striving to develop rapport, Charmaz (2006) says, leads to mutual respect and understanding (Charmaz, 2006). This is proposed as a more profound way of observing and interpreting a participant's view of their world.

3.6.3 Interviews and Data Collection

A pilot interview was conducted with one female mixed race participant to ensure construct reliability and validity, using the devised questions. They were interviewed in a comfortable setting of their choice. Feedback was obtained after the interview in relation to the questions, and documented within the Aide Memoire. The grounded theory approach suggests collaborating with the participants throughout the research process, to ensure reliability (Fassinger, 2005). The interviewee stated that they enjoyed the interview and found the questions different to that of what they had been asked previously in their life. They stated that they found the interview therapeutic in crystallizing their thoughts regarding their identity and experience of counselling. The interviewee requested a copy of the transcript, which was emailed to them. Their subsequent email to the researcher regarding their post-interview thoughts were added to the memo notes. The questions were deemed suitable as the participant answered them with ease, and they elicited rich data. Further questions which arose as a result of the pilot study and memo notes were added to the 1st protocol, in keeping with grounded theory philosophy (Charmaz, 2006). Sampling of the 1st participant was conducted as a result of the main emerging themes from the pilot, i.e. physical appearance.

Prior to the interviews, all the participants were asked to complete the demographic details questionnaire. Informed consent was requested and the participant was assured of their

anonymity. A brief explanation of the study was given again, confirming that the participant was aware of the nature of the research. At this point, in keeping with the constructivist tenets of grounded theory, the researcher explained her interest in the study and disclosed information regarding her ethnic heritage and motivation to research within the area of mixed race identity. Efforts were made to ensure that this was conducted sensitively- , and followed what Fine (1994) calls “the ethics of involvement and the ethics of detachment” (p. 75). For example, the participants were given space to ask personal questions regarding the researcher’s heritage and understanding of mixed race identity

This created rapport and helped to build trust between the researcher and interviewee, prior to conducting the interview. This is seen as a critical factor in constructivist grounded theory, and acknowledges that the findings will therefore be co- constructed between researcher and participant (Charmaz, 2000). With some interviewees building rapport and ensuring that the participants felt confident in disclosing such personal narratives, took a longer period of time. However, this created the environment necessary for the interviewee to initiate into a personal, poignant discussion regarding their life experience.

The participant’s right to withdraw was stated prior to the interview, and reiterated within the information sheet (Appendix 2). They were offered the opportunity to correspond with the interviewer with regard to any distress, further questions or thoughts. The participants were thanked for their participation, and notified again that their interview was confidential. They were also notified of their right withdraw at any stage of the research process. A participant code was allocated to them for this instance. This was re-stated on the debrief sheet (Appendix 4). Participants were also offered the opportunity to be sent the emergent codes arising from their own data, to help ensure reliability of results.

3.6.4 Theoretical Sampling and Design

The sampling and data analysis was an iterative process which involved the re-formulation of the interview schedules (Appendix 6-9) after each focused coding process. This incorporated previous saturated data codes, to ensure uncovered codes could emerge (see data analysis section). This meant that the sampling was carried out using the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2006). The memo notes and initial coding were used to see what themes were emerging, enabling the re-formulation of the protocol. However, to ensure rigor, the *re-ordering* of themes into categories took place in 3 phases following research which supports this use in modern grounded theory (Goulding, 1999; Bruce, 2007; Charmaz & Henwood, 2008). Phase One was carried out after 2 interviews, Phase Two after interviews 3 and 4, and Phase Three after interviews 5-8. The combination of an iterative and phased design facilitated time efficiency and accuracy.

Memoing after each interview consisted of thoughts and reflections regarding how the interview progressed, alongside email correspondence from interviewees. Included in this writing were transpersonal aspects, such as rapport between the researcher and the participant, as well as feedback from the participant. The process of theoretical sampling in grounded theory must also include the sampling of such memo notes, participant feedback and correspondence (Fassinger, 2005). A sample of the memoing and feedback can be found in Appendix 10- 13. New questions and expansion of existing questions were also noted for the next protocol. This created a funneled approach to questioning which enabled a detailed questioning of important emergent themes within the middle segment of the interview.

The final sample encompassed 4 lay people and 4 trainee counsellors. 6 of these people received emails through their University subject departments asking for research participants. 2 of these 6 participants were lay Undergraduate and Master's Students studying English and Mental Health respectively, and had previously engaged in counselling. 1 person

was referred through snowball sampling, and met the criteria at the particular stage of theoretical sampling, and 1 person saw the request on a *Facebook* group page link. The interviews were 11.5 hours in total, with an average interview time of 1.44 hours.

Table 7. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS TABLE IN ORDER OF THEORETICAL SAMPLING

PSEUDO NYM	AGE	SEX	OCCUPATION	ETHNICITY OF MOTHER	ETHNICITY OF FATHER	TIME IN THERAPY/ RACE OF THERAPIST	PARTICIPANT REGION OF UPBRINGING/R ESIDENCE
LILLY	21	F	NON COUNSELLOR	ASIAN	WHITE EUROPEAN	4 MONTHS/ WHITE BRITISH	LONDON/ LONDON
JEMIMA	38	F	TRAINEE COUNSELLOR	AFRICAN	WHITE EUROPEAN	1 YEAR/ WHITE BRITISH	WALES/ LONDON
ANNA	29	F	TRAINEE COUNSELLOR	ASIAN-AFRICAN	ANGLO-AFRICAN	2 YEARS/ WHITE BRITISH	LONDON/ LONDON
LORNA	23	F	NON COUNSELLOR	ENGLISH	MIDDLE EASTERN	13 YEARS/ WHITE BRITISH	LONDON/ LONDON
KARINA	56	F	NON COUNSELLOR	WHITE EUROPEAN	CARRIBEAN	3 YEARS- WHITE JEWISH	BORDER COUNTIES/ LONDON
KATY	24	F	NON COUNSELLOR	ASIAN	WHITE EUROPEAN	4 MONTHS/ WHITE BRITISH	LONDON
LISA	32	F	TRAINEE COUNSELLOR	WHITE EUROPEAN	BLACK AFRICAN	5 YEARS WHITE BRITISH	SOUTH AMERICA/ LONDON
PATRICIA	25	F	TRAINEE COUNSELLOR	WHITE EUROPEAN	ASIAN	3 YEARS/ WHITE BRITISH	EUROPE/ LONDON

Table 6: Anonymised demographic table listing participant with their corresponding number, age, sex, mother and father's ethnicity, length of time in therapy & race of therapist, geographic area of up-bringing & current residency.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Authorization from the Roehampton University Ethics Panel was sought prior to study commencement. The nine main tenets of the BPS code of ethics (BPS, 2006) were

followed to facilitate in- depth interviewing methods. Informed consent was requested at the beginning of each interview. For transcribing purposes, consent to record was requested in writing. No deception was involved; however specific aims of the research study were withheld to avoid interviewer effects and emotional discomfort, thus minimizing the participant's inclination to give socially desired responses. Interview questions endeavored to be non- leading and interactive. Pseudonyms were used in all transcripts, and organizations and persons mentioned within the transcript were anonymised. The participant was notified of their right to a copy of the transcript. They were offered the opportunity to discuss their interview further, upon the reading of their data and emergent themes.

A relational approach was used by the interviewer in order to facilitate a positive and supportive interview experience. However, the researcher was aware of their own clinical experience and the need to manage this process, whilst actively listening to the participant (Dallos & Vetere, 2005) from a research perspective. This helped to minimize any desire to interpret the narrative, focusing instead on data emergence. The researcher remained vigilant of any distress to the participant throughout the interview process. The participant was asked at certain points during the interview if they were happy to continue. The right to withdraw was explained prior to/ and post interview, in-line with the BPS Code of Ethics (British Psychological Society, 2011). Recorded interviews were stored on a PC laptop, password protected and accessed only by the researcher.

Ethical consideration was given to the analysis of the data. The constructivist position in grounded theory acknowledges the researchers influence over the data. This was considered from an ethical perspective during analysis. Therefore, the coding of data was constructed as transparently as possible, endeavoring to remain close to the 'spoken word', whilst keeping in mind the reflexive field notes and memos from the previous interviews. The coded data was discussed with the research supervisors' and their feedback taken into

consideration. The Aide Memoire was stored securely for audit purposes. Participants were notified that the recordings and raw data would be destroyed in keeping with the rules set out by the BPS Code of Ethics for research (BPS, 2006).

3.8 Validity and Reliability in Grounded Theory

The very nature of constructivist methods assumes the researcher as subjective, and being part of the research process from beginning to end. Rigor must be considered with this in mind (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A number of different strategies were used to ensure accuracy was maintained. Firstly, supervision was key, and used on a regular basis, where questions and themes were discussed, whilst also incorporating the reflexive positioning of the researcher. The Memos and field notes were kept and revisited after each interview, to review the quality of the emergent themes. This allowed the researcher to consider the interview in more detail. These were looked at before each subsequent interview, helping the researcher to use the ‘constant comparison method’ of analysis throughout the research process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Telephone and email contact was used between the participant and researcher, giving the participant an opportunity to discuss any aspects which emerged as a result of the interview. Countertransference reactions were noted within the memos, as were possible participant transference behaviours. These were all used in the theoretical sampling of information and data. This continual verification that the grounded theory method uses is said to help ensure reliability (Cresswell, 1998). Confidentiality was stressed at the beginning of the interview. This hoped to minimize any difficulties by the participant in sharing personal information.

The sample size and length of time of interviews contributed to rigor within the study. Using a longer interview protocol than in previously published dissertations and research

(Winning, 2010; Athanasiadou, 2011; Duan, 2011), enabled a richer account of the participant's experience of being in counselling. This justified the use of 8 participants, as some of these previous studies used a maximum of 12 participants, interviewed for a shorter length of time.

Reliability and validity have also been taken into consideration throughout the analytical stage of the study. The researcher is encouraged to have an internal dialogue of analysis regarding what is being said (Charmaz, 2006). The researcher's memoing of transference/ countertransference reflections enabled this internal dialogue. The constructivist canon of subjective awareness reminds the researcher to engage with the discourse from this stance. The essence of constructivist grounded theory lies within these thoughts. Memoing provided a reflexive stance to formulating a felt sense of what was *said* and *unsaid*. This provided consistency during the analysis stage. A detailed discussion of analytical rigor is provided within the data analysis section.

3.9 Data Analysis

3.9.1 Initial Coding and In Vivo Codes

The initial interview unearthed a number of initial codes. These were formulated by using Charmaz' (2006) suggestion of asking a number of questions such as: "*What is this data a study of? What does the data suggest? From whose point of view is it suggested? What theoretical category does this specific datum indicate* (Charmaz, 2006, p. 47)?" The codes were constructed from the data by moving through the data line- by- line, and then segment – by- segment, paying attention to particular words/ sentences/ paragraphs which raised themes. The meanings of statements were noted within each segment of the data. Taking into account the performative nature of language (Burr, 2003), the meanings within the sentences were analyzed, with an understanding that the statements were a construction- not only of the

questions being asked, but entwined within the symbolic interaction of interviewee and researcher. The transcript was read and re-read a number of times, each time the initial codes were re-considered as being an accurate reflection of the client's meanings and intentions. Some statements yielded a number of themes. Charmaz (2006) states the data must not be reduced, but kept open through the use of the interviewee's own language. These special terms or *In- Vivo* codes, contain significant meanings and experiences, which are said to correspond to the participant's social world (Morrill, 1995). Examples of *In- Vivo* codes which emerged were '*other's questioning of my identity.....isolation and loneliness*', '*feeling different as a result of the Other's gaze*', '*he (therapist) just focuses on the universal side of things*'. The initial codes, written as a set of meanings and processes, were tentatively written in the margins of the transcript. An example of the *In Vivo* codes (with focused and theoretical codes) can be seen in Appendix 14. The initial codes, in keeping with the philosophy of constructivist methodology (Charmaz, 2006), were analyzed against the *Aide Memoire*. For each subsequent interview, the *In- Vivo*, line-by-line, and paragraph-by-paragraph codes were analyzed against the previous theoretical codes, to gain a better understanding of the intention behind the participant's narrative.

3.9.2 Focused Coding

The aim of the focused coding was to ensure that the initial codes were synthesized in such a way as to capture the themes of the line-by-line coding succinctly. These should be more conceptual and selective in nature (Glaser, 1978). The focused codes were compared to the larger theoretical codes of the previous data, ensuring the minimization of any pre-conceptions of the topic in question. The focused coding essentially condenses the initial codes into a category which exemplifies the experience being conveyed (Charmaz, 2006). These were at times similar to that of the line-by-line codes, where the original phrase gave

the clearest picture of the narrative being analyzed. Some focused codes used the wording of the *In- Vivo* code, remaining authentic to the participant's words.

The focused codes were re- checked a number of times on different occasions, to ensure researcher effects- such as her reading of a particular theory, were not contaminating the procedure. However, it was acknowledged that there were symbolic interactionist aspects of the researcher- interviewee dyad. The data was considered from this perspective, where it was assumed that underlying meanings and intentions were embedded within the data, with the researcher as co- producer of it (Charmaz, 1995). Using the constant comparison process (Charmaz, 2006), the focused codes were checked against previous focused codes, theoretical codes and preliminary results. Each data set was considered both uniquely as a set of results, and also against previous data- set results, in keeping with the ground up approach (Charmaz, 2006). In total, 42 focused codes were generated. These were counted for occurrences within the transcript, ensuring analytical accuracy, and a results table was devised to observe any relationships between the themes (Appendix 15).

3.9.3 Theoretical Codes and Revision of Interview Schedules

The theoretical codes specify a relationship between the line- by-line and focused code categories, bringing them together to weave a story (Glaser, 1992). The purpose of the theoretical code is to hone the data into a sharp analytical concept (Charmaz, 2006). In doing so, it forms the basis of an eventual grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000). The theoretical codes within this study were compared against previous preliminary diagrammed results and memo notes. Keeping an open mind to the theory formation was a key aspect of the analysis. Charmaz (2006) states the importance of ensuring the analysis process is fluid and interactive. Codes were therefore tentatively formulated, and the transcripts and *Aide*

Memoire were re- visited on a number of occasions, to ensure the participants' story was captured within the developing sub- categories.

The new theoretical codes which emerged from each data set, informed the development of the new subsequent interview schedule, thus expanding the themes and generating new, richer data. Each theoretical code occurrence was counted within each transcript. This ensured reliability of results, following Charmaz' (2006) proposition that each researcher should find an individual approach to help them achieve rigor within their analysis. The theoretical codes were then collapsed into over- arching themes in phases. These were diagrammed to compare their relationship to the provisional core category (the emerging grounded theory). Diagramming is seen as a key factor in constructivist grounded theory, where a picture can be developed to observe the flow of events between complex categories (Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006). The diagramming within this study (Appendix 16-19) enabled a detailed process of observation of the relationships between the theoretical codes and sub- categories. The theoretical codes were then grouped, and married to a formulated sub- category, which conveyed the essence of the theoretical codes. The emerging sub- categories all linked to one main/ core category- that of the developing grounded theory (Appendix 16 - 19). This process was iterative and evolved throughout the analytical stage.

3.9.4 Saturation of Codes

The sub- categories were further developed until saturation emerged at data set 5 (see results section for final diagram), where the core category emerged as 'Societal tribalism and the social order of mixed race- from birth to therapy'. The point of saturation within grounded theory is considered to be when fresh data no longer points toward new insights (Charmaz, 2006). However, within this study, saturation was also accomplished by comparing conceptualized codes to see if they generated any new properties between them

(Glaser, 2001). The theoretical concepts which emerged from the data at this point showed a similar pattern, and thus did not warrant the need to consider further comparisons. The tentative sub- categories stayed static from data set 5. The same process of iteration was applied to data sets 6, 7, and 8 (in-line with the phased design), yielding sufficient (Dey, 1999) but similar codes. The sample size and research aims were deemed suitable to expect saturation at this point (Charmaz, 2006).

It could be argued that theoretical saturation may not be possible in any research, regardless of the expanse of the sample. However, small samples- if conducted using intensive interviews allowing for a detailed observation, will enable quality saturation to be established (Charmaz, 2006). Dey (1999) advocates that the analysis should reach *theoretical sufficiency*, where theories can always be subject to modification. It is therefore acknowledged that saturation within this study was achieved with an inter-subjective lens, in keeping with the constructivist approach to the researcher's co- authorship of the data (Charmaz, 2006) and sample size. This ensured that the results were both sufficient and appropriate to constructivist ideals. Within this study the codes which emerged from data set 6, 7 and 8 unified the previous data sets and theoretical codes. A social constructionist perspective highlights a number of ways a phenomenon can be explored. To achieve saturation within this study, a tension needed to be held between this and the aims of the research.

This chapter has put forward the methodological orientation the researcher used to examine the aims of the study. It also addresses the method used to conduct the research. The following chapter illustrates the findings as a set of results, which are analyzed alongside a preliminary discussion of findings.

4

Results

This chapter illustrates how a social constructivist grounded theory method (Charmaz, 2006) was used to construct a theory about how British clients of mixed race heritage manage the role of being mixed race within the counselling room. Within this investigation, the study focused on how their therapists negotiated with this process from a social constructionist and symbolic interactionist perspective.

One core category and 3 sub-categories were constructed through the process of In-Vivo, focused and theoretical coding methods. These categories formed the structure of the emergent grounded theory.

The theoretical codes and sub- categories which constitute the body of the grounded theory are illustrated from emergent themes in data set 1 to saturation at data set 5. Each set of results is illustrated in Appendices 16- 19. These results demonstrate the researcher's interpretation of the data, following the tenets of the constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006).

4.1 Diagrammatic Representation of the Grounded Theory

A diagrammatic representation below of the findings, illustrate the core category, the sub-categories and the theoretical codes, which constitute the grounded theory.

Data Set 5. Map Illustrating How Mixed Race Identity is Managed and Constructed from Birth to Therapy



Figure 1. Illustrates the grounded theory with the interwoven sub-categories and theoretical codes

4.2 THE GROUNDED THEORY: SOCIETAL TRIBALISM AND THE SOCIAL ORDER OF MIXED RACE- *FROM BIRTH TO THERAPY*

4.2.1 The Main Findings

A tension exists between how the client manages the role of being mixed race within the counselling room, and how the therapist engages with the narrative. This tension is brought about by a social order in society of where mixed race people must be located. Starting from birth, the mixed race person is forced to question their existence as a result of society's difficulty in 'seeing' or 'recognising' them as a person. The role the therapist plays perpetuates these feelings of distress. The therapist is also embedded in society's pathological way of seeing difference. The mixed race person experiences the therapist as a mirror of their family and the outside world. An enactment takes place where both client and therapist approach therapy from the premise that the mixed race person must undertake a process of change to fit in with the social mores of a neurotic world. Their own integrated self must be questioned.

The participants within this study oscillated between talking about family and society when asked about therapy, highlighting the triangulation and symbolic interaction between therapy, family and society (Comas- Diaz & Jacobsen, 1991). The results also show that therapy was conducted via a dominant discourse of what is seen as 'normal' and 'abnormal' (Haritaworn, 2009a). This was highlighted by how the client's unconscious processes were not meaningfully engaged with as a result of the therapist's embedded belief- system (Frosh, 1989) and their model of therapy. These models however, are situated in Eurocentric ideals regarding therapeutic gain (House, 1999; Loewenthal, 2003). Race and being raced were not acknowledged in the room to minimise anxiety for both client and therapist (Chang & Berk, 2009). As a result, the participants could not meaningfully engage with the therapist, and gain a deeper appreciation of why they experienced a sense of dislocation in the world.

What emerges from this study is a need to remain within a safe theoretical politick, avoiding any controversial challenging of ideas regarding the dominant counselling discourse of Selfhood. Intersubjectivity between client and therapist is therefore minimised. The status-quo of communication within the counselling room demonstrates what the client experiences in the outside world. This continues to reinforce the habitus of how mixed race people position themselves in the world and with others. The irony being that what leads them into their therapeutic journey- that of a refusal to be recognised as valid in the world- continues to be unconsciously reinforced by their therapist.

4.3 Interview setting

The interviews were conducted in pre- booked study rooms, as well as the homes of the participants- if the participants preferred this setting. This enabled a more personal approach to the interviews, in keeping with the rapport building which necessitates a constructivist GT approach.

4.4 Results and Preliminary Discussion

4.4.1 THE CORE CATEGORY: Societal Tribalism and the Social Order of British Mixed Race- from Birth to Therapy

The participants within this study discussed different aspects of how society's refusal to recognise their racial identity enacted throughout their life course. The narrative of their story highlighted 3 main interwoven areas of social order. Some of these areas were specific to the counselling relationship. However, most areas overlapped with the mixed race person's lived experience. The participants' own words are used in quotes within the theoretical codes. This acknowledges the co- construction of the results between researcher and interviewee.

4.5 Sub- Category 1: The Neurotic Society and Exclusion of Mixed Race

Sub – category 1 incorporated 4 theoretical codes of 'The 'Doing' of Mixed Race: Performativity and Questions of Hybridity'; 'Whitening Words: 'Mixed' Emotion and the Unseen Client'; 'Understanding the "Flux" of Marginalisation'; and 'Grieving the Loss of the Mixed Race Self'.

4.5.1 The 'Doing' of Mixed Race: Performativity and Questions of Hybridity

Racism and fear were predominantly spoken about by participants in relation to being asked about their experience of being mixed race. This was specific to their life outside of the therapy room. However, an oscillation existed between the two, and featured in many of the stories revealed by the interviewees. Bhabha (1994) has written of ostracism as a way of 'Othering', taking place through issuing judgements regarding Otherness. In this interview I was reminded of this when Jemima spoke at length about her own experiences and how even her existence- the core of an ontological security (Laing, 1960; Giddens, 1991; Nayak; 2006), was unsettled by the 'gaze' of people within the dominant and hegemonic groups. As Butler (1997a) has stated, such a racist pedagogy is often used to 'injure the other' and in Jemima's

story, there was a sense that she was to fit into a particular ‘regulatory regime’ (Butler, 1997a) established by a dominant hierarchy, or else she should expect to be ‘injured’. Society is shown to view the Other here in a way which complies with binary ideas of normality (Haritaworn, 2009a).

Participants were asked whether they felt their colour influenced their mixed race identity. For Jemima, her existence- which formed the basis of her ontological security in the world, was brought into question by others as a result of her mixed heritage. Her colour seemed to allow the dominant group access into her personal space, where they could judge whether or not she was acceptable to be included. As Fanon (1952) remarks, this is a process of exclusion, resulting from the colonial archives of knowledge which oppress what is different. Although Fanon’s (1952) writing are contextualised as the white person as oppressor, here Jemima speaks of the racism of other black people, which suggests that **all** groups learn this racist pedagogy. She describes an example of this in an incident which took place shortly after her arrival to London, where some Afro- Caribbean girls on a bus questioned her black heritage:

Researcher: “Have there been any negative or positive interactions in the world, which have influenced how you now feel about your identity as a mixed-race person?”

“Yeah, when I first moved to London I had the most horrendous experience on my first day here which really sort of mapped out the next couple of years to be honest.....They (black girls on bus) were judging me, and they were judging my background, they were judging my parents, they were judging my existence, and how it might have come about, and actually it also made me think, so if my mother was white, then what would be your reaction to that, cause it certainly wasn’t going to be positive either. They had this attitude

which was, 'you know you're mixed-race. It's not right. It doesn't work with us.'

Likewise, Lilly, described how physical appearance played a role in being rejected by others during her formative years, supporting the findings of Tashiro (2002), where representations of 'self' are internalised as negative according to others interactions. She described how this impacted on her identity formation:

"It's because of my skin colour that I was never really accepted by other girls when I was growing up. I was too fair to be friends with the Asian girls, and too dark to be friends with the white girls... I always kind of felt if my skin was white and if my hair wasn't so dark and I didn't have dark eyebrows and dark eyes, I would just fit in with them and no one would ask questions, or not even ask questions, just shun me without asking questions....I think that probably forced me to start developing an identity as a young mixed-race person."

When Lorna was asked about her skin colour and how this influenced her identity, she described her experience of how others used it to justify prejudice, supporting Fanon's (1952) writings regarding the 'colonial archives of knowledge (.p116)'. Here, Lorna also describes a type of emotion work (Hochschild, 2003) and intra- psychic dialogue (Heidegger, 1927), which must take place simultaneously to bear a form of 'othering', that seems to necessitate a derogation of her existence.

"Sometimes I get the 'odd feeling', like this really religious girl I knew at Uni. She didn't like the whole thing of mixed-race, she liked it being pure, and she said that to me.... that she thought it was better to be pure than mixed race....I wasn't upset, I felt like, well I wouldn't ever surround myself with someone

like you. So it's not gonna get to me. But I did, there was an inkling. It didn't completely not affect me."

What also becomes apparent is the mixed race person's vulnerability with all mono racial groups. Racism is experienced as White, Black and Asian hostility. No safe space exists for the person who is mixed race. All participants spoke of their continual experience of emotional distress due to racism, as a result of what others perceived to be their ambiguous embodiment of race. When asked by the researcher: *"What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the social world in terms of being mixed-race, and have these ever come up in therapy?"* Jemima described the process of how emotions were constructed to deal with the distress of racism, and how this was both a strength and a weakness. This highlighted the performativity (Butler, 1997a) 'to do' mixed race:

"Contentment- When actually I wasn't at all, but it made it easier to build relationships with people, have relationships with my family that existed where I'm from. When I cried and got upset it didn't work- it wasn't happening at all.....My family did not understand how I could have been, in any way, emotional about what happened. My mother and father leaving, being left in Wales with my (white) grandmother. You know, they did not get that. When I cried it was, shut up, you know, it was, don't be silly. So I think..... that I very soon adopted a persona which I still carry to this day....."

For the participants within this study, the racism they experience stems not only as a result of colour, but also from what Gilroy (1992) terms the other's fear of their 'halfness'. The notion of hybridity is brought in here as it suggests mixture or impurity (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1961). It is stigmatised, as mixed race is 'seen' as not fitting into a set of

racialized schemas. This illustrates the Kleinian notion of splitting (1946), where what cannot be tolerated is split off, and projected onto another. This is illustrated within the study as a key feature in society's way of viewing halfness. When asked about her experiences of how the world views mixed race, Katy describes this phenomenon:

"I think it's hard to avoid really. It's always gonna be- especially cause being half brown and half white. There's that physical kind of difference as well, and then they see me and they see my mum and they think, oh, that's her daughter and that's bizarre to begin with- just the physical difference."

For others, the social interactions involved in being mixed race are anxiety provoking, as they must continuously consider their selfhood, as suggested by Haritaworn (2009a). There is an unconscious need by society to justify the existence of what does not fit into set norms. The mixed race person as a result of these socially constructed ideals of what is 'normal', starts to see themselves as not normal. When asked, ***"what should others in the world understand about mixed race?"*** Lorna discusses her frustrations:

".....even at work, people working with me, "where are you from, where you from then – no, no, no originally". I'm always like, "I'm from England"- like I was born here, and they're like "no no originally, originally", and they all try to guess.....I go out to a bar or something, if I meet someone (they ask) "where you from then".....trying to think they can work out a bit more about me from seeing where I'm from. But there's always that questioning with me, because I look different- and I don't like that. Sometimes I just wanna be normal."

The frustration of having to explain one's existence is shared by Patricia, when asked about how others engage with her mixed race heritage:

“....If I say I’m from London then I’m from London. Why do you need to ask me where is your background from? You know why-, why are you noticing that I’m different.”

For some, the embodiment of mixed race is key to how they interact with others, as described by Tashiro (2002), where self is experienced as either negative or positive, dependent on their social interactions. Jemima discussed the impact of being raced:

“It influences a lot of the way I see myself, and it influences the way other people see me, and in the way that they see me. That influences me too....”

4.5.2 Whitening Words: ‘Mixed’ Emotion and the Unseen Client

The questioning and refusal to be recognised as mixed race is internalised by mixed race people within the study. They must repress their distress to comply with what society and the therapist refuse to acknowledge- that of their mixed race identity. The participants described how they negotiated their emotions with the assumption that there will be an *unsaid* and *unseen* of mixed race. The negotiation of emotion was first put forward by Arlie Hochschild (1983). The idea of negotiating emotion suggests for mixed race people, that emotion is something that has to be ‘worked out’, to be ‘taken care of’ and ‘monitored’. The therapist appears to become embedded in a form of societal splitting (Klein, 1946), whereby the therapist issues a narrative of therapy that is in tune with a dominant narrative, but at the same time, wishes to show the client they are empathic and understanding. Anna describes this as ‘colourblindness’. She alludes to the repressing of anxious feelings, and to the embeddedness of emotional self-care, which is unconsciously triggered within the therapeutic setting.

“I think because, although I haven’t put a great emphasis on being mixed race because I have these worries- and I do have insecurities about being mixed race, that I always feel the need to push them to the back of my mind when I’m in the therapy, because I feel you do find this environment where there is this colourblindness. If I have any insecurities, anything in the past that I feel really uncomfortable with in terms of fitting in, I just never feel the need to bring it up....”

The present findings illustrate that clients of mixed race are reticent about acknowledging their distress and find a way to negotiate ‘away’ their feelings, pushing away what their feelings mean, and regulating emotional repertoires that emerge (Averill, 1980; Hochschild, 1983; Harre, 1986; Lutz, 1988; Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). Their interactions in the world result in a difficulty in experiencing their feelings as valid. The space they exist in-between two or more racial categories, has created their own unconscious misrecognition. Fraser and Honneth (2003) write about this when discussing the impact of society and State on a person’s suffering, as a consequence of misrecognition. The findings also support research conducted by Rockquemore and Laszloffy (2003), where it proposes that therapists should develop a relational approach to unearthing identity difficulties. However, the present study highlights a gap in the literature, where misrecognition of mixed race is enacted by the client as a result of the therapist’s avoidance. Katy supports this theme:

“There have been times that I kind of just, almost put it to the back of my head and think ‘oh you know, I bet everyone has that experience, those problems that I have as a mixed-race person.”

Lisa supports this. She admits to the suffering involved in having to negotiate an identity when there is a ‘blindness’ toward mixed race and a refusal to ‘recognise’ it (Fraser, 2003). When asked about how her therapist engaged with this topic, she described ‘control’ as

being a factor in the negotiation of avoidance. This supports previous finding by Comas- Diaz and Jacobsen (1991), where they state that ethno- cultural transferences may take place which are related to a power based status quo:

“Perhaps the therapist is aware that this is such a sensitive topic for me, and perhaps the therapist has picked up on that- I don’t know, and thought, ‘this is not the time. Perhaps this would not be the best time to address it’. But if they thought that, perhaps if I were upset... so what is it about the control? I’m the one who is controlling them?”

For mixed race people within this study, the therapist’s avoidance of their mixed race is shown to minimise any growth in emotional resilience and identity development. When asked how the therapist may have helped Anna to gain a better understanding of herself, there is a realisation that her mixed race was quite often overlooked:

“I think by him addressing it earlier, it probably would have helped me to alleviate a lot of my insecurities and probably cope with it better. Cause, I can’t really solve the situation of any of the insecurities, the unsaid - externally, but you can deal with how you see yourself. Perhaps if he’d (therapist) brought it up earlier, it would have allowed me to cope with it a bit better.”

The therapist’s remit of focusing on emotions meant that that the *context* of the emotion is ignored for mixed race people within this study. Karina’s discussion appears to show how emotions have to be regulated and ‘worked out’, and yet this is missed by the therapist who appears to misrecognise her feelings, and shapes them with a predominantly ‘white’ and dominant discourse (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012):

“Do people of the same race experience the same emotions? and by being a different race, do you then experience a different emotion? ... where my therapist comes from is ‘no’, it’s got nothing to do with the race. It’s to do with whatever you’ve experienced, and how you perceive it.”

For many clients, including Lorna, it is apparent that the therapist is unable to *see* the relevance of the context of distressing experiences. This supports Rockquemore and Laszloffy’s (2003) proposition, that therapists should bear witness to the client’s narrative of being mixed race. The current findings uncover the disconnection between the client’s needs and the therapist’s agenda:

“They (therapist) don’t recognise how environmentally we’re affected by being mixed-race.”

Shame was a contributing factor in how clients construct their emotions. When participants were asked about their experiences in the outside world of racism, they described early feelings of shame and embarrassment as a result of how others viewed them. This supports Goffman’s (1963) theory that what is realised and negotiated as a result of early experiences of being an outcast, is experienced as feelings of shame or embarrassment. The mixed race person, if we are to use Goffman’s (1963) ideas regarding shame and stigma, recasts these feeling in everyday interactions. It also illustrates Fraser and Honneth’s (2003) research, where social order is seen to prelude misrecognition, and where egalitarianism and humanitarianism are called upon to mediate social order, and thus misrecognition. Karina described an experience of this regarding a romantic relationship, where the closeness of the relationship was contrasted to the ‘hiding’ of her to others and therefore a ‘remoteness’ emerged that she had not understood or recognised, but was pointed out to her quite starkly:

Researcher: “Have you experienced any positive or negative reactions to being mixed race?”

“The only time I’ve ever really thought about it (racism) was when one of my very first boyfriends, and I remember we used to always go somewhere that was very remote.... I was talking to a friend of his, and he said well that’s cause, he’s you know... you’re not white. And I thought, oh, oh, aren’t I? You know, it really hit me hard.”

These feelings of shame re-enact within the therapeutic setting. Participants discussed the defences they develop to avoid the subject. It appeared that the stigma associated in being mixed race contributed to their sense of self, supporting previous writing (Goffman, 1963). Lisa described how this enacted within the counselling setting:

“They (therapist) might be fearful of offending me, but perhaps the reality is that I’m not ready to face it yet, or I don’t want to face it. That’s been my protective- my defence mechanism. I don’t want to face it.”

For other clients, the symbolic interactionist aspects of shame lead to an intra-psychic selfhood as discussed by Taylor and Nanney (2011), where mixed race people are said to grapple with existential anxiety, as a result of having to continually re-negotiate their identity. The present study proposes that this may lead to the enactment of avoidance which takes place in the counselling room. Katy, when questioned further regarding her statements about performing mixed race, illustrated how ‘self’ must be negotiated to combat shame:

“As a minority group, I always wanna be proud of the fact that I’m mixed-race, so it’s not weird or abnormal or strange.”

4.5.3 Understanding the “Flux” of Marginalisation

The universal striving to belong may have led to the feelings of shame which participants talked of. When asked what mixed race means for the participants, what emerges from their narratives is the negotiation of otherness in their reflexive and reflective accounts of ‘self’. This coincides with Butler’s (1993) theory of ontological status as being developed through a history of embodied status, where the subject’s identity is developed through the language and definition of others. However, Giddens’ (1991) ontological security must also be acknowledged within these findings, as it illustrates how self is formed through a set of reflexive behaviours, and hence we ‘become’ who we are here. Lilly highlights this salient aspect of being mixed race:

Researcher: “What does ‘mixed race’ mean to you?”

“All the way through my teens I thought that mixed-race was defined by being half black and half white and everyone else who was mixed, but wasn’t of THAT mix, was in a kind of flux.”

The difficulty for mixed race people in negotiating a space to belong is due to the fact that they cannot fit into a cultural zeitgeist from which belonging is formulated- through interactions via language and meaning. This supports the postulations of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), where racialization is seen as political and cultural, and rooted in narrative and meaning. When asked about the difficulty in trying to fit into different cultures, Karina states:

“This idea of identity and belonging is far more of an important factor than culture.”

The intention behind Karina’s statement is that culture is too prescriptive a concept to facilitate what mixed race people need to *belong*, and where the idea of belonging is seen as a

recognition of their mixed race by others. The marginalisation of the mixed race person may be too simplistic a concept to engage with in the counselling room. It is in-fact the tensions which result from this that are of greater relevance. Mixed race people within the context of these interviews are saying much the same thing, as articulated by Lorna:

“That whole- you haven’t got a group to belong to, you haven’t got that mutual support, you know, but...I do feel I get some comfort from people who are mixed-race. But yeah, just someone who’s exactly the same as you, there’s no questioning, you’re there in that group, like you’re part of it....yeah I want that understanding, I want that understanding”

Patricia explained the anxiety provoking uncertainty of what mixed race people experience internally. This raises the need for therapists to gain an understanding of the different levels of social scripting, as described by Avery, Richeson, Hebl, & Ambady (2009), where scripts regarding race must be must be formulated and used to initiate difficult but relevant conversations, based on knowledge of what the person needs:

“Not feeling like I belong to any particular culture or group or country, or not knowing. I think that sits with me all the time about lots of different things.”

The uncertainty of not knowing where the mixed race person fits is seen to create a tension within the therapeutic relationship. As a result of the client’s fear of rejection, if they present their ‘real’ feelings and thoughts, their development of self remains immersed in power discourses in the counselling room as is experienced by them in society. This supports what Bourdieu (1991) considers ‘habitus’- the positioning of self, according to dominant institutional practices. Lisa discussed the fear of ruptures within the counselling room. When questioned further regarding this, she talked of her experience of trying to belong in the world and how it re-presents in therapy:

“I think that (therapy) is a re-enactment of how I am in the world. That if I embrace my blackness- and I think it was underlying all this, and how I position myself in the world in relation to my race, being mixed-race. Perhaps if I embrace this disowned part of me I will be rejected. So, I think that probably that’s what’s going on for me…… I will be rejected in my personal relationships, I will be rejected by my friends, I will be rejected in work. I will be rejected.”

For Lisa, owning the raced (Butler, 1994; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) aspects of herself created an anxiety of being rejected by others. Lilly describes how selfhood is negotiated as a consequence of misrecognition, when questioned about how the therapist engaged with her discussion regarding others misrecognition of her mixed race:

“I think every time you’re attacked, it forces you to strengthen your belief in who you are.”

4.5.4 Grieving the Loss of the Mixed Race Self

For mixed race clients within this study, the therapist’s insistence on focusing on how the theoretical model positions itself within the context of the client’s narrative minimises any discussion regarding their racial identity, and how social interactions influence this. Intersubjectivity, as discussed by Frosh (2002), is overlooked when the therapist is unable to acknowledge what race- and in particular mixed race, means for the person. Furthermore, what is unique to this study is how the mixed race person grieves the loss of their mixedness as a result of the lack of acknowledgment of it within the counselling space. Lisa describes this:

“I mean, now I can see how major it was- my physical appearance and the issue of race. But I had a quite a lot more to do with when I was growing up. And even now perhaps it’s being overlooked in therapy, because I have a lot more going on as well. I don’t think I had ever realised what such a big part it plays in all aspects of my life.”

The way the self has to be ‘hidden’ or ‘lost’ continues to be evident, regardless of the needs of the person. Butler (2003) describes this as the mourning of one’s identity. Furthermore, the impact of parental attachment in relation to identity is illustrated within this study, supporting previous work (Mukoyama, 1998; Root, 1998; Fatimilehin, 1999; Mooney, 2008). It also supports Laing’s (1960) work regarding the consequences on ontological security if the client’s family dynamic lacks relatedness. For mixed race people, their identity is racially connected to the parent. If these attachments are difficult or impacted, it is shown to result in a ‘loss’ of the person’s identity also. When Katy is asked if she feels anything is lacking in her counselling she describes this loss:

“I guess like finding out more about my dad’s background and....yeah, definitely how I relate to being Italian, like half Italian, and how I feel now my dad’s gone. Obviously I’m still half Italian, but I feel maybe I’ve lost a part of that, part of my identity through losing my dad. Maybe just touch on that more, because that is something that, looking back now thinking, that is important.”

For others, like Lisa, ‘self’ was related to feelings of self- worth as a human being (Rose, 1993; Gammelgaard, 2003), and this appears intrinsically difficult to come to terms with in therapy. She described how her therapist did not acknowledge the relationship between race and self- worth, and therefore the therapeutic dialogue remains within a ‘safe’ and ‘tame’ narrative. As Leonardo and Porter (2010) suggest, there is a pedagogic fear at

play, where the therapist refuses to leave the safety of the model, and the way it has been interpreted in training:

“What I’ve said in the room about race was not acknowledged, was not picked up, and my sense of worth- I think it is not identity, but self-worth. I think how it (mixed race) has really influenced my sense of self- worth.”

4.6 Sub- Category 2: Counselling Omnipotence and the Forgotten Client

Sub- category 2 encompassed 2 theoretical codes of, “‘Shifting the Focus” to Counselling Rhetoric’ and ‘Colluding with the Avoider and “Making it Alright” ’.

4.6.1 “Shifting the Focus” to Counselling Rhetoric

For the therapist, the confusion may lie in the fact that mixed race people occupy the border of east and west (Haritaworn, 2009a). The participants describe how therapy is conducted through the grounding of orientalist ideals, as described by Said (1978). The difficulty in homogenising them as a group means that avoidance is sustained through the Eurocentric tenets of counselling theory, as discussed by House (1999) and Loewenthal (2003). When asked about how counselling was conducted in relation to discussions regarding her heritage, Karina supports this notion:

“Is it because it’s just not thought about? or is it because if it’s thought about it has to be dismissed, because of the way that society is at the moment around race and colour and everything else.”

For other clients power assertions are consciously felt in the counselling room, situating the client within a dominant discourse of ‘truth’ and offering support to Foucault’s writing (Foucault, 1979- cited Taylor, 1984), where he argues that power is masked by

various 'regimes of truth'. Katy explores reasons for the lack of engagement by the therapist around her discussion of being mixed race:

"Maybe my therapist didn't find it of importance or didn't regard it as something that needed to be discussed. Maybe just something that is what it is, and doesn't need to be talked about."

The institutionalised expert position of counsellor renders the client powerless. The fear of the unknown is unspoken in the room, supporting Cardemil and Battle's (2003) proposition that race discussions are lacking in therapy due to the therapist's difficulty in engaging with the topic. Lilly described her experience of this when asked about what further thoughts the interview raised for her:

'Maybe they've heard of other people who've had the same experience as you, so maybe they'll be able to shine a light on it that you wouldn't yourself. So that is maybe why you trust what they are saying, and agree with it.'

This study, unique to others, uncovers the continual shifting of focus by the therapist, away from discussions surrounding mixed race. Lorna describes this:

Researcher: "How did your therapist engage with your conversations regarding your difficult experiences of being mixed race?"

"They just haven't given me much back about it really..... they're just not saying anything. They just focus on something else. They shift the focus."

Others, like Jemima, when asked what was lacking in their counselling experience, highlighted how her therapist avoided discussing racial differences within the family. A

proposition cited by Root (1990) as being vital for the person to understand their status as Other:

“Ask me how I feel..... Personally for me- how did I feel about being brought up by a white grandmother when I was mixed-race....Something which could have come up by now. Something which we haven’t talked about, but I’ve talked about being brought up by - I did say my white xxxxx Grandmother. So actually saying so how did it feel to be mixed-race in that environment. It’s a really simple question, and it’s certainly not offensive. And it would make me think. But it hasn’t been brought up.”

An undercurrent of power, as discussed by Chang and Berk (2009), is also evident in how discussions are manoeuvred away from the topic of mixed race. Anna supports this in her experience of how counselling models are used to avoid contentious discussions:

“I have talked about being mixed race and how I fit in with my family, and how my family perceived me.....and it’s just a kind of- he (therapist) just focuses on the universal side of things.”

Karina describes explicit avoidance of the context of mixed race:

“I think the vulnerability is what she (therapist) feels...or my vulnerability is far more related to what happened to me when I was born? Now the fact is, what happened to me when I was born is a function of my mixed race.”

Therapists’ misrecognition of mixed race results in confusion for the client. There is an emergence that the stigma which mixed race people experience in their earlier years

manifests again within the room. The therapist perpetuates this as a result of their difficulty in understanding that the client needs to engage in a discussion surrounding the social constructionist aspects of mixed race. This supports previous findings (Hall, 1990) which show that it is others that find mixed race difficult, more than the mixed race person themselves. When asked about how the therapist engages with the topic of mixed race, Anna alludes to this:

“I can’t really tell, but I think maybe there is something that perhaps he doesn’t.....that he thinks I’m going to say that will make him.... that he’d be uncomfortable dealing with.”

Denial of selfhood continues within the clients’ therapy, as it does in the outside world. Lisa describes how familial denial of race as previously theorised (Mukoyama, 1998), is re-enacted within the therapeutic setting through the use of counselling models:

“They (therapist) won’t focus on that- the focus would be on the relationship, not on the issue of race.....and actually which is quite relevant, the fact that I have a different race from my mother.....the part of me that reminded her (mother) of my father, that’s the part that she also wanted to deny. It’s been re-enacted in the room, it’s been denied again.”

Karina describes the subtle ways in which power is asserted to avoid talking about her identity, supporting literature which highlights how therapists engage with clients (House, 1999) according to their theoretical frameworks. When asked whether she feels certain aspects of her narrative are avoided, Karina describes the historical occident (Said, 1978) of mixed race in the disavowing of her identity:

“I think it just doesn’t come into her head. I know that sounds odd, but I think it’s such an obvious thing that she doesn’t let it come in, because then that might detract in some way from what she thinks is important.”

When asked about what thoughts the participant had regarding the interview, Jemima compared mixed race people to other historically stigmatised groups and how a lack of social capital (Bourdieu, 1991) still exists for people of mixed heritage, and why difference is not acknowledged as a result of this:

Researcher: “what thoughts have come for you as a result of this interview?”

“I was thinking back to when there had been ever been an opportunity really (to discuss mixed race). I mean yes, I could go in there tomorrow and talk about it, and when we talk about identity that doesn’t seem to ever be something that comes up...because it’s obvious that I’m mixed-race. It’s obvious from what I say that I’m mixed-race. It’s as if I was to go into that room and to say that I was gay, that would possibly be picked up on, and something that perhaps we’d talk aboutShe (therapist) must know that there’s difference here, and there’s difference in the room. But there’s been no discussion about it. There’s been no touching on it in any way.”

The participants within this study showed a heightened awareness of unconscious racial contention in their therapist. Similar to previous findings (Cardemil & Battle, 2003), they suggested that the therapist’s own difficulties in thinking about race may have underpinned the minimising of discussions around it. Anna describes this when asked why she thinks her therapist repeatedly avoided the narrative of her mixed race identity:

“All counsellors have a prejudice of some sort of another, and how aware he (therapist) is of them, I’m not sure. But I think it does influence the dynamic- that it’s not being said.”

For others intersubjectivity means mixed race must be included in other aspects of their identity, allowing the whole person to be acknowledged, supporting Roots (1990) propositions regarding the need to acknowledge the person’s ‘Other’ status. When asked, *“how should the therapist engage with mixed race?”*, Patricia states:

“Allowing the mixed-race part of me to be there in the room, seeing me for everything that I am- you know, mixed-race, tough, nice, horrible, whatever. All those different things that I am.”

Intersubjectivity as theorised by Benjamin (1998) within the context of race, is said to be an awareness of the importance of race discussions. This is shown not to be meaningfully engaged with when mixed race is mentioned by the client. Power is seen within this study as being socially constructed, as a result of the historical legacies of mixed race. This creates an understanding for the mixed race person that their identity will continue not to be seen or recognised within the counselling room. One way of overcoming the problematisation of mixed race within the micro setting of the therapeutic session, is for the client to collude with the therapist in a silencing of mixed race ‘talk’.

4.6.2 Colluding with the Avoider and “Making it Alright”

A controversial discursive space is denied as result of collusion. The result of a lifetime of the other’s negative gaze means mixed race people are positioned by society to have a heightened awareness of safety. What results is an inclination to collude to minimise

their, and the other's anxiety. Society's difficulty in understanding mixed race is shown in this study to be enacted within the paradigms of counselling practice. Discussions regarding the racial context of identity are denied, resulting in a symbolic message to the client that they must 'do' therapy according to the cultural practice of counselling and counsellor. Supporting Pope- Davis, Toperek et al's (2002) research, which states that clients in cross- racial dyads will adapt to suit the needs of the therapist to avoid rejection by them, Jemima describes her collusion with her therapist. When asked why her discussions regarding her heritage have not been engaged with, she states:

"It's (discussing mixed race) something I had thought about before I went to therapy, because identity is something I've struggled with, but it wasn't the first thing that I've talked to them about.....maybe I'm avoiding it as much as they areMaybe there's enough going on."

The burden of bringing in mixed race as a topic of discussion is shown to be overwhelming at times for clients. Both therapist and client are located in a habitus of safe counselling practice, where controversial topics such as race are not thought about. In- line with Chang and Berk's (2009) proposition, that clients will try and bridge the dissonance between themselves and the therapist, to enable their own therapeutic change, Karina explains her experience of this when asked, ***"what thoughts has this interview raised, if any?"***

".....It (mixed race) probably just doesn't enter her (therapist) head. or am I just minimising it and making it alright for her, cause I have a tendency to do that."

The therapeutic relationship is protected by the client. The social order of where mixed race is located is enacted within the counselling room. Borne out of the need to belong, the mixed race person is fearful of challenging this habitus (Bourdieu, 1991) within the counselling space. Although the current findings support Shih and Sanchez (2005) research where the difficulties in being mixed race are sustained as a result of misrecognition, these findings offer a unique insight into how mixed race clients have an implicit understanding of their social order in society, and thus within the counselling room. Lisa describes this when asked: *“Why do you think mixed race does not get addressed in your counselling?”*

“I wonder if it has not been addressed because the other also doesn’t experience there’s a difference. So again I’m protecting my therapist... perhaps it suits me. Perhaps I’m scared. Perhaps because it suits me, this thing of wanting to fit in and if it’s not addressed, perhaps it’s because I’m doing really well at fitting in”

An anxiety exists for mixed race people in challenging the power of mixed race in society- that of not fitting in. The participants within this study describe their fear of the Other’s stereotyped view of them, supporting Fanon’s (1952), writings where he describes a colonial interpellation in how the person of colour is ‘seen’ by the dominant group. The interpretations which are offered imply that there may be a theoretically underpinned answer to the client’s discussion, supporting literature by Brookes (2012) who cautions against the theorising of race, without due diligence to what racist pedagogy this may be re-enacting in the counselling room. Lilly describes this when asked about how she would like her therapist to engage with the topic:

“Getting me to talk about it in depth instead of kind giving me the answers and saying do you agree? You kind of have to agree because if you say no, you’re not being cooperative”

Not being 'seen' is constructed by both therapist and client, supporting literature which states that the client disappears as a result of the colonization of Other (Frosh, 1989). Lorna, talks about how this disappearance is re- enacted enabling both to remain in a safe discourse:

“Maybe its cause I’ve done it (not talking about mixed race) without realising that it’s me being mixed- race that’s affected me so much. Maybe if I showed, you know some more recognition of that then maybe they would try and focus on it. I think they’re trying to steer it the way I want it to go”

Safety is shown to be a critical component in why mixed race clients within this study collude. Research (Dovidio, Kawakami, et al, 2002) suggests that the mixed race person will intentionally avoid anxiety provoking discussions as a means of minimising emotional stress. The present study uncovered that mixed race clients exist in a belief- system that there are untouchable aspects of self, both outside, and inside the counselling room. Karina talks of the lack of safety which exists in her counselling.

“I told her something today that I’ve never told anybody else in the world, and that’s what two years in...you know so it’s taken two years for me to be able to tell her something that’s quite important to me..... it might be useful to be with someone that explores what I think being ‘white’ is, what being ‘black’ is, what being ‘mixed race’ is, and I don’t think I’d ever go there with this particular therapist.”

Issues of race and mixed race are shown to remain stigmatised in the eyes society, and therefore also in that of mixed race people. To overcome this, there has to be an

understanding of the enormous complexity of mixed race as a construct, as stated by Song (2010a). The current findings also support research (Avery, Richeson, et al. 2009) which highlights the need for social scripts to initiate discussion of difficult issues. When asked why clients are reticent to challenge avoidance of mixed race, Katy states the following:

“I think for me I wouldn’t go into therapy and start talking about me being mixed race straight away, just because I feel like it’s..... whenever people ask me I have to talk about it a lot. I have to explain a lot of things and it can be quite draining to go over and over kind of explain who I am really. it’s a bigger deal than people really assume.”

This study proposes the need for therapists to have an in-depth understanding of what mixed race is for these people, and how and when it should be initiated. The lack of knowledge perpetuates a stagnation of the client’s self, based on power and socio- historically embedded ways of interacting. Lisa encapsulates this in her statement:

“There is a fear, and this fear could be again, a part of the process..... I’m quite fearful. I’m actually thinking how would I react if my therapist brought that up. I think perhaps it’d be a sense of relief, and there would be a slight hesitation as well.”

4.7 Sub- Category 3: The Mixed Race Journey from Loneliness to Otherness

Sub- category 3 incorporated 4 theoretical codes of Holding the Burden of Others “Colour-blindness”, The Mirror of Mixed Race Loneliness and Imposed Suffering, The “Alien” in Therapy, Being British and not “Chuckling Away” the “Other”.

4.7.1 Holding the Burden of Others “Colourblindness”

The impact of being subjugated, raced and disowned resulted in feelings of confusion for mixed race people. The repudiation of their Otherness underpins their difficulty in being able to consolidate their sense of self both outside, and within the counselling room. A pressure to understand themselves is imposed by others' confusion of them, supporting the writing of Bhabha (1994), who argues that Otherness results in a vernacular cosmopolitanism, where one must move between cultures, existing in a hybrid form of life. Katy discusses this, when asked to expand on how she dealt with other people's need to categorise her heritage:

“I spoke to my mum about it, and feeling very confused about that part of my ethnic background. And I think still to some point there always will be a bit of conflict there, because it’s never gonna be fully understood by people.....”

Mixed race people continue to hold the responsibility of self- insight within the counselling space, as a result of their lived experiences of being disavowed their selfhood. The *third space* which Bhabha (1994) speaks of appears not to exist for them. The current findings suggest that the mixed race person needs a third space within the counselling room. Anna shares her thoughts on how she makes space, and manages her role of being mixed race in the counselling room:

“I do kind of feel that if I don’t clarify it in my own head, then I can’t really expect my therapist to understand it either, and I think because it’s such a thing that’s personal to me, then I feel in order to work it out, for him to understand me, I have to work it out first, for myself.”

Within this study, mixed race people enter therapy with the assumption that their therapist will eschew discussions around mixed race, in keeping with what Moodley (2007)

posits as hegemonic racist practices in the counselling room. Their belief system is embedded in the interaction of not being 'seen'. However, for others this interaction also leads to their own difficulty in understanding themselves. The current findings support research (Sinclair & Hai, 2002) which show that mixed race people will initiate conversations around other aspects of self, to avoid discussions regarding their mixed race. When participants were asked about why they have a reticence to challenge the therapist's avoidance of mixed race, Karina described her own lack of psychic insight and avoidance, as a factor in this:

"I suppose it's because all the anxieties you have you never really put down to being mixed-race. The anxieties you might have you might put down to your sexuality, you might put down to your relationships, but you never pinpoint it as being due to your race....so, if you did, and you understood that there is this relationship between who you are, and the race that you portray or feel you are, then I think you would push it (in therapy), but because I think it's very difficult to understand what that is, that relationship is. That's probably why you don't.....it's far easier to be able to talk about neurotic transfer or death anxiety....."

This psychic conflict is theorised as being borne of out others confusion over their mixed race (Barn & Harman, 2005), where they are denied any space to exist in the world. For mixed race people this appears to form the foundations of their selfhood. Patricia illustrates this when asked about her experience of others perceptions of mixed race:

"I think you know, being confused from such an early age about who I was kind of really stayed with me until now, because I still can't say where I'm from."

The lack of homogeneity which exists for mixed race people in their racial, cultural and religious backgrounds are shown to intersect, as discussed in previous studies (Shih & Sanchez, 2009; Haritaworn 2009b; Song, 2010a). This is realised within these results as creating difficult emotional negotiations. Anna discussed the complex aspects of mixed race and the reasons behind her difficulty in holding the dialogue of her heritage within the counselling room:

“I think it’s just the sheer complexity of the subject made me a bit cautious about talking about itthat’s why it gets kind of confusing, because when it gets confusing, it’s really hard to bring it to my therapist, and I think that’s probably why it kind of takes a back burner to other things.”

The intersectional aspects of mixed parentage are shown to emerge through familial interactions also, in-line with previous research (Root, 1998; Mukoyama, 1998; Hall & Turner, 2001; Shih et al, 2007), where the family were seen as an integral factor in negotiating mixed race identity. The participants talked about how society and therapist lacked an understanding of how difficult it can be to negotiate ‘self’. Lorna explains how this created an added stressor in negotiating her identity:

“I don’t think people realise what it’s like growing up in two different cultures clashing cause my mum’s a strong a Catholic, my dad’s Muslim- cause that, I think, that’s affected me a lot.”

Jemima supports this difficulty, describing an existential view of how mixed race people ‘see’ how they are located in the world, and how this is not engaged with by the therapist:

“Some people might say its equal....but actually we haven’t got equal experiences so therefore we’re not equal in that sort of humanity. Yes we’re all humans, but we’ve all experienced different things. And sometimes it’s because of our colour, or our religion...various things. But no, I think its colourblindness or just not being something that’s present in that relationship.”

For others, although there is an acknowledgment of the cosmopolitan aspects of their identity as theorised by Said (1978), they describe the blind-spot which exists for therapists when faced with a complex racialized self, supporting Leonardo and Porter’s (2010) assertions regarding how society is colourblind. The current findings, inimitable to this study, suggest an ‘existential-intersectional’ aspect of mixed race, which must be explored within the therapeutic setting. This highlights a gap in mixed race models and training, where a specific integrated approach may be needed to work with clients. When asked about what the therapist was missing from their knowledge of mixed race, Lisa describes what has been disallowed in her therapy:

“....There is something about this experience of being in the world as mixed race. This very, very unique individual experience- very subjective experience of being in the world as mixed-race, there’s something else about the owned parts and the disowned parts, of the being, of this racial aspect, or cultural aspect of being mixed-race. They are, I think quite important to be acknowledged. I think that’s what I haven’t- it has not been done in my therapy.”

Katy explains further the need for the therapist to meaningfully grasp what mixed race means, and does not mean:

Researcher:” What do you think the therapist needs to know about you being mixed race, if at all?”

***“I suppose it’s dependent on what and where you’re from you know.....it’s different in every case- just cause one person’s mixed-race and another person’s mixed-race doesn’t mean they’re having the same experience*”**

4.7.2 The Mirror of Mixed Race Loneliness and Imposed Suffering

The complex nature of mixed race meant that clients within this study experienced a sense of loneliness in the world during their formative years, where no space existed for them to belong as a result of their ‘mixedness’. They are made aware of their difference, and segregated into the ‘limbo’ of an unconscious apartheid, which lacks all forms of ‘capital’ (Bourdieu, 1991). This supports previous research (Mahtani & Moreno, 2001; Binning, Unzueta et al, 2009), where mixed race people are shown to feel a sense of isolation from early on in life. For Lilly this was formed as a result of societal rejection. When asked how the social world influenced her identity, she states:

“When I was growing up it wasn’t really popular as an identity or an ethnic group or something to belong to. If you’re ‘black’ you’re ‘black’, and you hang out with other black kids, if you’re ‘white’ you’re ‘white’ and you hung out with the white kids, but there wasn’t really a group of mixed-race people who all came together and talked about being mixed, probably because no one really understood it.”

When asked the same question, Anna describes a similar view about the rejection, whilst also pointing out how her mixed race is denied to enable others to camouflage their racism of it:

“I think because of the sort of people that have made me feel uncomfortable, and made me feel left out and excluded and because I never really got a kind of clear answer from them, because a lot of people are kind of conscious about bringing up anything to do with race in terms of difference. A lot of people would rather focus on, “maybe you’re not good at conversation”, or “maybe (your) conversation is boring”, or “maybe you’re just too quiet”..... because no one has ever actually told me straight out that “we don’t like you because you’re mixed race. It’s very difficult to tell.”

For mixed race people, their sense of belonging must be negotiated racially within the family as well within society. The lack of ‘space’ to belong creates an understanding that they are alone at all times. When asked what mixed race means for Jemima, she explains the continual difficulties which exist as a result of her childhood:

“I think I struggle with that (being mixed race)...I struggle with that because growing up I didn’t really identify with anyone else but my own family, although I knew when I looked in the mirror I looked different (to them), and I felt different. I could only identify with that social grouping (white) because I didn’t actually have any other influence.”

The essence of loneliness is described here by Karina as a form of isolation from the world, as a result of the different racial mixes which constitute mixed race. This supports Laing’s (1960) articulations regarding how being misunderstood can lead to isolation, and eventually distress. It also supports work carried out by Haritaworn (2009a), who states that the racial ‘border crossing’ which exists for mixed race people, can lead feelings of isolation:

“It is a sense of... there isn’t anyone quite like me. And even if someone is mixed-race, would that be a mixture of xxxxxxx and xxxxxx? No. it could be African and Russian or something yeah, so they’re not really like me. That sense of being alone and actually being, really feeling very alone when you’re in an environment with lots of people, which is ironic.....and maybe the idea that you don’t fit into either camp is very evident.”

Lorna supports this statement. When asked about her lived experience of being mixed race, she explains the ‘suffering’ of her loneliness, which Taylor and Nanney (2011) caution as being ‘split off’ if not attended to within the counselling space. It also supports Laing’s (1960) ontological insecurity, where an ‘implosion’ of self can take place if suffering is not attended to by the therapist:

“I don’t feel I’ve had anyone else exactly the same. It just feels like sometimes I suffer alone. Like it’s very private, I’m always very private, it’s always me.”

What emerges is the importance of racial, over cultural belonging, for all the participants who were interviewed. Patricia ponders this when asked about the themes which arise in her counselling:

“I just feel again that kinda loneliness about not really feeling like I belong to one thing, not really feeling like....I know I say I’m xxxxxx and I’m a Londoner but what does that mean?”

4.7.3 The “Alien” in Therapy

The colonial discourse of racial hierarchy means that the mixed race person must fit into a social order of being. This creates an existential anxiety. Participants in this study described their location as being dependent on the language and ghettoization which constitutes their sense of self, illustrating society’s current prejudice of mixed race, based on what Gilroy (2003) calls the ‘half different and partially familiar (p.14)’. A new finding within these results is the continual request by the participants for therapists to engage with and initiate conversations regarding mixed race. The findings also highlight the racism which exists toward mixed race in the present day. When asked how the therapist can be of service in helping mixed race people to understand their sense of self, Jemima explained the linguistic assaults (Fanon, 1952; Butler, 1996) which take place regarding her selfhood:

“Like for example, people call me half cast, and it would be other people who would say, “ oh no you can’t call her that, she’s mixed-race”, and I would be like well actually they can call me what they like as long as it’s not done with any sense of hate, you know... and I will happily rectify that myself and explain what it actually means to be half cast, as opposed to mixed-race, but people find themselves sort of trying to fight my battle I suppose for me, so you know I was saying about knowledge and understanding, I think conversations about this in (counselling) training, more than just conversations.”

When asked why the therapist may have difficulty in understanding the client’s feelings of dislocation, Katy described this in relation to the intersubjective aspects of recognition. What emerges is the struggle which must take place to be recognised, and how this is not helped or enabled within therapy or in the outside world:

“ in therapy I think- even outside the therapy environment, just relating with strangers and friends, it’s hard to get across that I’m half this ethnicity and half this ethnicity.... and both are prominent parts of my life, and I guess someone who’s one full ethnicity will never really know what it’s like to be of two... I suppose it depends also on the therapist’s background....”

Mixed race people make the assumption, based on their social experience, that their therapist will not meaningfully understand where they are located. This supports Pedrotti, Edward et al’s, (2008) findings, which show that therapists fail to acknowledge feelings regarding misappropriation. However, these assumptions are also based on their previous interactions with the therapist which re-enact feelings of alienation, as shown within these current findings, and highlighted in Lorna’s narrative of misrecognition.

“I would just always feel like crying the whole time I was there (father’s country) cause I’d feel really left out, and I’d always say like, “oh I understand, it’s because of the culture, it’s because of this...” - and they (therapist) wouldn’t challenge me on that.”

Jemima talks of a more universal way of being, and how others who find difficulty with the concept of mixedness may see it as alien, supporting Gilroy’s (1984) writing, where others view what is different, as alien:

“We’re human, that’s it. But there are others who find it difficult. They feel like, I dunno, maybe they think I’m an alien or something, and that I’ve got these alien ideas about things because I’m not one thing or the other.”.

Discussions regarding racial and cultural difficulties are minimised by the therapist. The dissonance between public and private interactions leaves the client feeling dislocated. This isolation is further confounded by the therapist's reluctance to engage with a controversial discourse. The participant within this study explained their fear that the racial hierarchy which dictates their positioning in the world will be transferred into the therapeutic relationship. The client's striving for citizenship therefore must be weighed against the relational power dynamics which exist in the room. Anna illustrates this when asked about her fears in challenging the therapist about her avoidance:

"I want to be seen as an equal, but if I do bring that into the room what will happen to the dynamic?.....I didn't realise how important it (mixed race) was in how it influences how I feel, how I fit in in the world, how I fit in with social groups, how I fit in my own family- and the dynamics in my therapy."

For others, the contested space which mixed race must inhabit forces them to consider a more universal way of being. Karina talked about her early experiences of dislocation and how this has helped her to develop a more cosmopolitan identity, supporting Roots (1992) research, where mixed race people strive for a transcendental identity:

"There was very tangible things that made me feel I was a different race... but because I didn't come into contact with the black side of me, I feel quite alienated from that side of me. You know when I'm in a community with lots of black people I don't identity with them at all, absolutely not, and yet... it's strange really....and so, as time goes on and there was more mixed-race people, you feel you're creating a whole new race. I know that sounds odd but yeah, a race that is mixed."

4.7.4 Being British and not “Chuckling Away” the “Other”

The Otherness of mixed race identity is encapsulated by a desire for a cosmopolitan ideal of ethical universality. Borne out of the contested space which mixed race people must inhabit, means having to consider where they are located racially and culturally. For Lilly, her identity development was managed under the cloud of rejection by society. When asked how she viewed being mixed race, she talked about the factors which led to her developing an ‘other’ identity from that of the boxed categorisation which society impose. This supports Miville, Constantine et al’s (2005) findings, where mixed race people are shown to utilise a different aspects of their heritage and identity simultaneously:

“(I view mixed race) as a massive part of my identity. I don’t think I could define myself as anything else except for mixed because. I’m not in the Asian box and I’m not in the white box. I have to be in that box. But I also have quite a strong connection with both sides of my heritage.”

Lilly was able to have a connection with her racial heritage, in spite of society’s denial of her right to belong. The family appear to have a key role in early stages of identity development, either mediating or exacerbating the scale of emotional distress which is suffered in managing the exclusion that society imposes on them. For some, an identity which meant negotiating multiple racial heritages facilitated their sense of self. However, all the participants within this study talked of locating themselves comfortably within a transcendent identity, where an ‘other’ space was developed incorporating Britishness, concurring with previous research (Song, 2010b), which showed that mixed race people chose a British identity alongside as a racialized label. Karina describes this when asked: ***“What are your views on being mixed race?”***

“My parents have always instilled some sort of sense of that I’m me, and I’m special, and I’m unique, that I don’t have to be wedded to any particular culture it’s interesting. Its (mixed race) only something I’ve identified with in more recent years definitely. It’s not something I would have called myself. If someone had said what nationality are you, I would have probably just said British. I didn’t define myself in terms of a race at all.”

Jemima continues this theme, when asked about what she would like others to understand about being mixed race. Her reflections confirm previous research (Back, 1996; Alibhai- Brown, 2001, Aspinall, 2003, &Twine, 2004) where British mixed race people find comfort in articulating a global labelling, allowing them space to exist outside of boxed labels:

“As an adult travelling around the world, I feel sort of, global in terms of my visual- in terms of the way people see me. They know that I’m British, but I look like I might be from somewhere else. So there’s that sort of sense people don’t really know. There’s no like, you are this! You are from here! And this is what you are! So I’m not boxed and chucked away....”

For others, the cosmopolitan ideal is that of being an unconstructed identity or grouping, as a result of the lack of cultural belonging. Lisa illustrates this:

“I’m not ‘white’ and then I’m not ‘black’. So I don’t have this strong identification with a cultural aspect of being ‘afro’....But then I’m not white-

a hundred percent white as well. So it's, yeah, you have something undefined and it's living with that."

The concept of otherness reaches into the counselling room. For the participants in this study, the overwhelmingness of managing their mixed race identity was shown to be a lonely difficult journey, with little understanding from the therapist of the client's mixed race. A new finding within this current study pertained to the client's need for the therapist to acknowledge these difficulties, and find methods of engaging with them. When asked to discuss further her feelings of not belonging in the therapy room, Lorna talked about her lack of insight into how her mixed race has affected her:

"You're not like everybody else. I do have that feeling that I'm not like everybody else..... the more I think about it the more I do feel like I'm different- I always feel that difference actually. It's always there, and I wonder what effect that has had on me. Cause even I was thinking just sitting by myself in that room with the good therapist, I still felt very different to her."

This chapter has illustrated the results, put forward as a set of key findings of the aims of the research. It also offered a preliminary discussion of the analysed results, in relation to the relevant literature debated within the literature review. The following chapter gives a general discussion of the findings, and implications for the field of Counselling Psychology, academia and psychotherapy. It also offers a critique of the present study and reflexive considerations of the researcher's involvement in the study.

General Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The overall aims of the research were to investigate how British clients construct and manage the role of being mixed race within the counselling room. In doing so, it uncovered what discursive practices these produced between the client and therapist, and how the therapist influenced this experience. Using Charmaz' (2002, 2006) constructivist grounded theory to explore the research question; the results depicted the participants' narrative.

The final grounded theory and core category was *Societal Tribalism and the Social Order of Mixed Race- from Birth to Therapy*. This encapsulated the findings as it gave an understanding of the intersubjective, social constructivist and symbolic interactionist aspect of identity construction both within and outside the counselling space. It also highlighted how mixed race people experience the therapist as being part of the social order of a 'tribal' society.

The results highlighted 3 sub- categories: The Neurotic Society and the Exclusion of Mixed Race; Counselling Omnipotence and the Forgotten Client; The Mixed Race Journey from Loneliness to Otherness. The sub- categories were under the umbrella of one core category, which explained how a tension exists between how the client manages the role of being mixed race within the counselling room, and how the therapist engages with the narrative. This tension was brought about by a 'social order' in society of where mixed race people must be located. Starting from birth, the mixed race person is forced to question their existence as a result of society's difficulty in 'seeing' them as whole. The role the therapist

plays perpetuates these feelings of distress. The therapist is also embedded in the society's pathological way of seeing difference. The mixed race person experiences the therapist as a mirror of their family and the outside world. An enactment takes place where both client and therapist approach therapy from the premise that the mixed race person must undertake a process of change to fit in with the social mores of a 'neurotic' world.

The aims of the chapter are to present the findings in relation to previous research and literature; to discuss the implications of the findings in relation to mixed race identity, and working relationally within the counselling room. Finally the chapter will conclude with a summation of new findings; a critique of the research in relation to its limitations, and the researcher's influence on the research; and areas for future research.

5.2 Sub- Category 1: The Neurotic Society and the Exclusion of Mixed Race

The theoretical codes which encompass the sub- category of The Neurotic Society and the Exclusion of Mixed Race were: *The 'Doing' of Mixed Race: Performativity and Questions of Hybridity*; *Whitening Words: 'Mixed' Emotion and the Unseen Client*; *Understanding the "Flux" of Marginalisation*; and *Grieving the Loss of the Mixed Race Self*. These will be synthesised to enable a general discussion of the findings within the sub-category.

Society's idea of the Other (Bhabha, 1994) emerged with the findings as way of marginalising those who are outside the social norms of society. This supports previous research (Poston, 1990), where mixed race people are forced to 'fit' into pre-existing racial categories. The participants reflected that their existence was being judged, supporting literature which highlights the regulatory regimes which the Other is subjected to (Butler, 1997b). Racism was experienced through the questioning of physical appearance, halfness

(Gilroy, 2003), and notions of hybridity (Park, 1928). As a result, participants talked about how they performed 'self' through a persona, whereby they ignored their emotions and fitted into how society expected them to act. This supports previous writings by Butler (1997a) where she comments on how injurious speech is used to enforce power, and thus forms how one's identity is performed. The findings also support previous work, showing how social processes influence the way mixed race people choose to identify (Tashiro, 2002). The current findings suggest that mixed race identity construction is not just initiated by the social processes which Tashiro (2002) speaks of, but that a macro level hegemony underpin and facilitate these processes, rendering the mixed race person outside of dichotomous racial groupings, and therefore subjugated. Tashiro's (2002) findings offer little insight into the social mores of society. The current research puts forward the proposition that society's split (Klein, 1947) way of understanding mixed race is imposed onto the mixed race client, and so 'fitting- in' is not stable, but dependent on context and society's splitting (Klein, 1946), destabilising the mixed race person's sense of Self each time. Society is seen to force the mixed race person to question their position in the social order, and thus their security in everyday life. They are refused an identity or 'safety' structure, leading to ontological insecurity. This supports Laing's (1960) writing, which states that ontological insecurity is heightened by feelings of isolation.

A new finding within this study pertains to the challenges to ontological security (Laing, 1960; Giddens 1991) that mixed race people are faced with, both outside and within the counselling room. The post-structuralist position, where the subject's identity is formed through language and actions (Lacan; 1975; Butler, 1993; 1997a), is shown to be only one part of what encompasses an ontological security for the participants within this study. However, the ontological basis of 'being' which Giddens (1991) proposes as a 'reflexively organised endeavour (p5)', is also shown to be underpinned and influenced by a symbolic

interaction between the mixed race person and society. Therefore, the current findings illustrate that the mixed race person's ontological security is continually being agitated, re-organised and threatened by society.

This de- stabilising of Self is shown within the study to be partly encumbered by the 'abnormality' the mixed race person is told they exist within. This ratifies previous literature (Haritaworn, 2009a, 2009b), where colonially embedded perceptions of race mean the mixed race person is viewed against what is considered 'normal', 'white', or racially categorical. The abnormal, theorised as a form of hybridity (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1961), re- emerge within these findings, where participants are viewed with a historically positioned gaze, supporting previous literature (Fanon, 1952; Gilroy; 1982; and Lawless, 1995) that positions the mixed race person outside of pillared racial norms, where their halfness is rejected and questioned. The racism that participants within this research spoke of was experienced at the hands of **all** mono- racial groups. While British literature (Gilroy, 1982; Haritaworn, 2009a, 2009b) predominantly focuses on the concept of colonially charged white racism against people of mixed race, the present findings build on those of scholars, such as Tizzard and Phoenix (1993), where colonial stigmatisation of 'mixing' is used by all ethnicities to enact racism against what is considered outside of the categorical racial norms.

The racial 'integration' that the mixed race person embodies enacts a fear in society of what is not understood. The participants all talked about how society's gaze influenced their sense of 'self'. The over- riding aspect of their narratives was the difficulty society had in finding a way to 'normalise' them. What could not be tolerated was shown to be fragmented and split off (Klein, 1946). In societal terms this splitting was enacted through the misrecognition and rejection of their mixed race. The current findings support Haritaworn's (2009a, 2009b) work, where mixed race people are shown to be judged and rejected due to their embodied indeterminacy. The current findings add a psychoanalytical nuance to

previous research, where the participants' stories are dominated by their experiences of society's *abnormal* way of seeing difference, and where power is used to *project* this onto the mixed race person, subjugating them as a result of society's fear of difference.

The current research supports previous findings where emotions are shown to be socially and culturally constructed (Averill, 1980; Hochschild, 1983; Harre, 1986; Lutz, 1988; Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). However, an added factor within this study is the development of an embedded *self-care* which continues within the therapy room as a result of the therapist's misrecognition of mixed race. This self-care was shown to take place through the client's collusion with the therapist in avoiding discussions around race and mixed race. The participants spoke of this as being the result of 'colourblindness' by the therapist, where an enactment of avoidance takes place similar to that of society. Previous research (Comas- Diaz & Jacobsen, 1991) called this 'ethnocultural transference', where similar ways of interacting in the outside world can re-emerge within the therapy room. The present study adds to this, showing that the participants all discussed how they had to 'work out' their difficulties, before being able to talk about them in therapy. They appear to assume that will not be 'seen' by the therapist, which the therapist reinforces through their misrecognition of the client, supporting Bourdieu's (1991) supposition of 'habitus' where the person is 'positioned' in a given context as a result of dominant institutional practices. Therapeutic progression is shown within the present findings as being influenced by the therapist's misrecognition of the client's mixed race identity.

As proposed by Rockquemore and Laszloffy (2003), the present study highlights the need for therapist's to 'bear witness' and recognise both the mixed race clients' narrative, as well as their racialized personhood- it is argued that misrecognition in this instance reinforces the mixed race client's pain and stigma. The ethical frameworks (BACP, 2002; UKCP, 2009;

BPS, 2011)- which put forward the use of safe and healing practices by therapists, are seemingly denied to the client as a result of the co- construction of collusion.

The universal striving to belong for mixed race people is seen within this study as being difficult, as a result of the lack of ontological status that Butler speaks of (1993). Participants spoke about the “flux” they experienced as a result of not fitting into a historically racialized category, supporting Lacan’s (1975) proposition, that knowledge produces a revolution through the linguistics of language. The newness of the construct of the term ‘mixed race’ therefore positions the client, society, and the therapist between the stepping stones of what is ‘known’ and ‘unknown’. The mixed race person is excluded and somehow has to experience a liminal existence.

The current findings also support the notions of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), where racialization is seen as political and cultural. The study showed that how the clients engaged with their counsellor, was as a result of a fear of marginalisation, confounded by a lack of social capital (Bourdieu, 1991), where mixed race has minimal capital. Their belief- system- that they must exist in an uncertain space in society, meant that they feared ruptures within the therapeutic relationship also, supporting Comas- Dias & Jacobsen’s (1991) research, where clients are shown to have a heightened awareness of ruptures, due to difficulties in race talk. However, the participants also appeared to hope, through their narrative within the counselling room, for their therapist to meaningfully understand the distress they experience of not fitting in. Within the current findings, the *transference and countertransference* in the room was that of feeling marginalised, which may have been triggered by the distress of ruptures within the therapeutic dyad.

The marginalisation of mixed race per se, within this study, is seen as being less relevant than the tensions which underpin it. The participants spoke about a variety of difficulties which underlined their feelings of marginalisation. These connected to previous

narratives of racism and also to that of disowning aspects of their racialized Self to minimise marginalisation. The essence of these discussions was a need for a greater understanding regarding the complex nature of not 'belonging'. The present findings support the suggestion (Avery, Richeson, Hebl, Ambady, 2009) that social scripts- which include knowledge regarding types of racial difficulties, must be utilised to explore mixed race identity.

The therapist's misrecognition of the client's feelings of marginalisation meant that the participants felt a sense of loss over certain aspects of their Self. The therapist's insistence on focusing on their theoretical model of practice reduced intersubjectivity. This supports Frosh's (2002) assertions that the intersubjective aspects of the dyad are overlooked when the social constructionist factors of race are not attended to. The participants within this study discussed how exploration of self- worth and selfhood were denied to them. This denial disavowed any exploration of race in relation to their early life attachments. Similar to previous findings (Mukoyama, 1998), all the participants within this study spoke of their parents' ethnic status and how this influenced their understanding of their raced and mixed race identity. It also appeared that race played a significant role in their attachment to their parent, supporting Hall and Turner's work (2001). Their desire to discuss this was continuously countered by the therapist's insistence that they remain within a 'safe' narrative of counselling rhetoric. This adds a different dimension to previous findings (Mukoyama, 1998; Root, 1998; Fatimilehin, 1999; Mooney, 2008), as this study highlights the therapist's difficulty in being able to engage with a significant aspect of any counselling model- that of the caregiver, when race is brought into the arena. Crucial aspects of insight become denied to the client on numerous occasions, suggesting a ubiquitous fear by therapists to engage in race 'talk'. The therapy is shown to be more about the therapist's agenda and fear, than that of the client's psychic suffering.

5.3 Sub- Category 2: Counselling Omnipotence and the Forgotten Client

The theoretical codes which encompass sub- category 2 were “*Shifting the Focus*” to *Counselling Rhetoric*’, and ‘*Colluding with the Avoider and “Making it Alright”*’. The following is a synthesised general discussion of those findings.

Counselling is shown within this study, to progress from the *unseen* of marginalisation, to the unconscious manipulating of power by the therapist. The tenets of counselling practice appear to be used to manoeuvre conversations away from race and colour. The participants within this research all spoke of their awareness of their therapist’s reticence to discuss race. Haritaworn (2009a) surmises that in the other’s eyes, a confusion exists in understanding the mixed race person’s ‘border’ racialization. The findings support this, adding a dimension to those findings where the counsellor appears to be embedded within society’s splitting (Klein, 1946). The side-lining of race ‘talk’ is shown to be conducted through an orientalist expert position (Said, 1978), where the therapist ‘conducts’ the therapy and ‘dismisses’ what is not relevant to their ‘regime of truth’, supporting Foucault’s (Foucault, 1979- cited Taylor, 1984) writing on how these ‘truths’ are used to mask power. These findings support Cardemil and Battle’s (2003) proposition that race discussions are lacking in the therapy room, as a result of the therapist’s difficulty in engaging with it.

What also emerged within these findings was the client’s hopeful trust in the therapist. The participants spoke about instances where they brought in the subject of their mixed race, in the hope that what was not acknowledged in the outside world may in some way be healed within the therapeutic space. The findings show a re- enactment of power, where the client was silenced through the therapist’s refusal to discuss race. Root’s (1990) proposition that familial, social and political aspects of identity should be discussed for the mixed race person to gain an insight into their Other status, was continually shifted away from, focusing more

on the counselling frameworks. This supports House's (1999) articulations regarding what he calls the 'incursions' of counselling practice, where it creates a destructiveness to the human relational qualities of therapeutic work. The participants all spoke of the therapist's averting of discussions around 'race talk', focusing more on the characteristics of vulnerability and other counselling 'concepts'. Hall (1990) proposes that the mixed race person's difficulty in formulating Self is borne out of society's insistence on ignoring their identity as mixed race. The current study supports this, and suggests that there is a projection of stigma on to the client.

The racial contexts of familial interactions were shown to be overlooked by therapists within this study, creating a dissonance between Self and Other for the mixed race person. Aspects of identity, which were denied to the client through familial interactions, were seen to re-enact within the therapeutic space. Said (1978) discusses a historical occident, where there is an assumption by society of the power structures which they must be situated in. The participants showed an awareness of this when describing where they were symbolically situated in the counselling room, supporting Bourdieu's (1991) writing regarding institutionalised symbolic power and the habitus this creates. Mixed race appears as central to social ordering within the therapeutic space, to the extent that- although the therapist has little knowledge of mixed race discourse, they seem to position themselves in a powerful position. A finding exclusive to this research appears to be the lack of knowledge that therapists have of mixed race as a construct, and the lack of training in how to engage with race from an intersectional perspective. Previous research shows a correlation between treatment success and racial knowledge (Constantine, 2002). It is proposed that the unseeing of the mixed race client within this research, is perpetuated through societal ignorance, based on a lack of knowledge and power discourses. The therapist also appears to be entrenched within society's blindness.

The complex nature of mixed race, and the avenues of relational difference which fail to be explored, are shown within this study to have created a stagnation of Self for the participants. This appears to have limited mutuality and intersubjectivity in the therapeutic relationship. This supports Benjamin's (1998) writing, where she proposes that therapists must have an awareness of the importance of engaging with race discussion- especially if it mentioned within the counselling room. The significance of ruptures is mentioned by authors as being an important avenue to relationality in cross- race dyads (Chang & Berk, 2009). For mixed race clients their 'half' whiteness may be deemed by them to be a connecting factor to the therapist who is white. However, it is evident from this study that they are witnessed by the therapist as the Other. Therefore, this study proposes that ruptures, and self- disclosure- as mentioned by Burkard, Knox et al (2006), may also be important components when working with mixed race clients.

Power, social order and 'regimes of truth' are shown within these findings as simultaneously promulgating misrecognition of the client, as a result of the historical legacies which stigmatise and subjugate the mixed race person. The current research highlights how this burdened the clients and created an unspoken understanding of how they must 'do' therapy. One way of overcoming the problematisation of mixed race within the therapeutic session, was for the client to collude with the therapist in silencing race 'talk'. This supports previous findings by Pope- Davis et al (2002), where clients in cross- racial dyads are said to adapt to suit the needs of the therapist, for fear of being rejected by them. The participants spoke of how they bridged the unconscious distance between themselves and the therapist by 'minimising' issues to make it "alright" for the therapist. What is not "alright" may be what Fanon (1952) describes as the colonial 'gaze', and how it lays within the membranes of modern western society. The collusion therefore is shown as being a defence against having

to experience implicit racism. What is also evident within these findings is the unconscious lack of trust by the client, as discourses are whitened and made ‘alright’.

A colonial interpellation of the Other was shown to be perpetrated by the therapist, and countered the trust which scholars (Ogden, 2004; Markova & Gillespie, 2008; Seemann, 2009) put forward as foundational to intersubjectivity. The participants within this study highlighted how- due to their fear, they colluded in bleaching away any difference between them and their therapist. An unconscious racial anxiety was shown to have ensued within the therapist – client encounter, where the client needed to adapt to fit in with the therapist’s lack of knowledge and skills, supporting previous findings (Pope- Davis et al, 2002; Dovidio et al, 2002; Chang & Berk, 2009). What the present study also uncovers is how the participants picked up on the therapist’s similarity to others in society, who ‘unsee’ and ‘silence’ mixed race. The subsequent collusion which is enacted within the therapy session is as a result of the client’s understanding that the therapist will not recognise their mixed race. The participants discussed the magnitude and repetition of questioning that takes place regarding their mixed race in the outside world, and how this is too overwhelming at times to engage with *again* in the counselling room. The therapeutic space is therefore also shown to be unsafe, as the client feels that they are not able to attend to their own suffering, due to the therapist’s ‘unseeing’ gaze. The current findings propose the need for social scripts (Avery et al, 2009) to be formulated and utilised within training and therapy. Therapists will therefore be more able to grapple with the complex heterogeneous terrain of mixed race identity, which writers have been urging society to do (Song, 2010a).

5.4 Sub- Category 3: The Journey from Loneliness to Otherness

The 4 theoretical codes which encompassed this category were: ‘*Holding the Burden of other’s “Colourblindness”*’; *The Mirror of Mixed Race Loneliness*; *The “Alien” in*

Therapy; Being British and Not “Chuckling Away” the Other. The following amalgamates these into a general discussion of the findings.

The misrecognition of mixed race was shown to impact on the participant's sense of Self as a result of feeling alienation and loneliness. They experienced a pressure to try and fit into society, while the therapist seemed unable to offer them a space to explore their mixed race experiences. This resulted in their desire to find a more integrated view of themselves, supporting Bhabha's (1994) proposition that the *third space* that some need, does not exist. Mixed race participants within this study positioned themselves in what Bhabha (1994) called a *vernacular cosmopolitanism*, where they found they needed to move between cultures, inhabiting a hybrid form of life. The participants all spoke of a hegemonic practice in the counselling room, where the hegemonic discourse was 'whiteness', supporting Moodley's (2007) theory of power- embedded, implicit racist practices which take place within the counselling room. The study also uncovered that, at times, mixed race people focused on less contentious issues within the counselling room, due to their unconscious understanding of the difficulty race discussions would lead to. This supports Sinclair and Hai's (2002) research, which shows that mixed race people avoid race discussions due to the anxiety it raises for them.

The early life confusion mixed race people encounter (Barn & Harman, 2005), as a result of being judged as 'Other', was shown in these findings as being replicated implicitly within the counselling room, creating an intra- psychic conflict, where the burden of 'being' mixed race was made the responsibility of the client. The participants talked of the therapist's blindness to their mixedness, which resulted in a difficulty in trying to sustain any dialogue regarding their racialized selfhood or identity. A continuous narrative emerged within this study regarding the participant's dislocation and complexity of Self, which they felt no- one- including their therapists, understood. Inimitable to these findings is the uncovering of the

existential anxiety and intersectionality of Self which mixed race clients experience as a result of both their lived experience, and its re- enactment within the therapy session.

The existential dilemma of the mixed race person's place in the world supersedes confusion, resulting in a lifelong loneliness, supporting previous findings (Mahtani & Moreno, 2001; Binning et al, 2009) where mixed race people are said to experience feelings of isolation from childhood onwards. The participants within this study all discussed this childhood loneliness, where they were rejected by peers and extended family, on the basis of not fitting into what was considered the 'norm'. Their embodied status re- surfaces as a thread in the narrative of loneliness, and being 'othered' by society and the therapist. Taylor and Nanney (2011) caution against allowing clients to remain in a lonely, existentially anxious positioning, stating they if this is not attended to, it can lead to a splitting off (Klein, 1946), where the client's Self is rendered fragile and fragmented.

Being alienated by society was discussed on numerous occasions by the participants within this study. This was shown to be triggered as a consequence of the colonial discourses of racial hierarchy. They spoke of a ghettoization and misappropriation of their Self, where terms like 'half caste' were still experienced by them, creating a dissonance between them and the world. Racism and symbolic oppression was forced onto them through the use of language in society, and confounded by their therapist's lack of acknowledgment of these situations. This supports what Gilroy (2003) called the prejudice toward 'the half different and partially familiar (p 14)', where he states a fear exists of what is different and must be purified. It also supports Pedrotti et al's (2008) research regarding the therapist's failure to take up conversations regarding the mixed race client's feelings of alienation. The present findings also highlight how mixed race clients prefer to utilise a transcendental identity, where they are able to encompass both parental heritages, as well as a more global identity of

‘Other’, endorsing previous studies which put forward this finding (Root, 1992; Miville et al, 2005).

The cosmopolitan ideal which the mixed race clients aspired to, is shown within these findings as being underpinned by early familial influences, as well as an ability to belong to a national identity. This supports Song’s (2010b) research, where mixed race people chose to simultaneously identify with racial, regional and national identity labels. This research highlights that mixed race people find comfort in using a global identity, where their Otherness is acknowledged as just that, supporting previous writing by British theorists on mixed race (Back, 1996; Alibhai- Brown, 2001; Aspinall, 2003; Twine, 2004). The participants all aspired to a de-categorising and de- constructing of their ontological status, where they could belong to a universal cosmopolitanism whilst not ‘chucking away’ their ethnic Self. They constructed an ontological security for themselves, which society had previously agitated. A new finding within this study pertains to the participants need for their therapists to acknowledge this within the counselling room.

5.5 Conclusion and Study Implications

The study has shown to contribute to the understanding of working with mixed race clients within therapy. It also offers a uniquely British perspective of mixed race. The analysis of the participants narrative illustrated that racial categorisation was shown to promulgate a ‘societal tribalism’, where others are judged as being ‘inside’ or ‘outside’ of racial norms. This is seen to create a social order, where the status of mixed race by virtue of its terminology, reject such colonially submerged hierarchies. Mixed race people find difficulty in locating themselves within such an order which lacks ‘social capital’ (Bourdieu, 1991). The knowledge of mixed race identity, that enables social capital, is shown to be missing in society. When discussing aspects of their therapy, the participants’ narrative

continuously interwove between the outside world and the counselling setting. The therapist was shown to be an agent of society, where they continued to disavow any recognition of the client's racialized Self through a racist hegemonic way of practicing. It appears that they interpret their training as being devoid of intersubjectivity when race enters the arena of discussion. They lack knowledge of the relevance of racial context in matters of intersectionality. This results in a 'doing' of therapy, following their regimes of truth (Foucault, 1979- cited Taylor, 1984) rather than their client's truths.

This research supported a number of previous findings, as highlighted within the general discussion. However, some new findings were extrapolated from within the study. What emerges is how the mixed race client's ontological security is continually challenged as a result of a symbolic splitting (Klein, 1946) in society, and how the therapist reinforces this through their *unseeing* of the client. Words and meanings are *whitened*, where the mixed race person must 'perform' to fit into the therapist's agenda of therapy by colluding with them. The mixed race person is shown to develop a cosmopolitan identity through the loneliness and psychic suffering they experience, which remains unexplored within the therapy session. The study highlights that a level of identity stagnation ensues as a result of how the therapy session is imposed upon the client. The participants appeared to say that they wanted their therapists to interact with their narrative of being mixed race, in a more meaningful way.

The findings from this study have a number of implications for Counselling Psychology practice. Firstly, it advocates a need for therapists to have a theoretical knowledge of mixed race identity through their training. More importantly, it questions how 'Ethics' are meaningfully engaged with and challenged in counsellor training. The pluralistic frameworks of Counselling Psychology show little consideration for how Ethics are measured when working with clients from different racial backgrounds to the therapist. This study proposes that awarding bodies- such as the BPS (2011), UKCP (2009) and BACP (2002),

should ask institutions for evidence that they measure the trainee's ethical understanding of working with *a number* of different diverse groups, making it part of their accreditation criteria.

The study also proposes that the collusion which takes place between the therapist and client is due to the fear of potentially contentious discussions. The current findings are cited as a basis for a mixed race counselling model, where social scripts (Avery et al. 2009) containing key questions and areas for exploration, can be developed and used. Within these scripts must be an 'existential – intersectional' approach to asking questions, and exploring what Self means, acknowledging this new finding within the study. The participants' accounts of their therapy showed how power was utilised to mask a fear of the unknown, and how this resulted in a reduced insight of the participants' sense of racialized Self. An exploration through personal therapy, of the therapist's own assumptions and prejudices is also put forward as integral to working with mixed race clients and reducing the power differential within the room.

The broad research question raised areas for future study. The participants were theoretically sampled according to their physical colouring, and accounts of difficulties in their embodied status. However, gaining an understanding of the diasporic element of mixed race, using a *white* mixed race sample, would allow an interesting insight into how Self is formed through the lens of experiencing 'otherness' from a *white* perspective. The use of a qualitative methodology would allow an exploration of what *white* means for mixed race people, and how they own or disown aspects of their raced ethnic heritage. The diaspora of mixed race as a result of slavery in the US is different to that of Britain, as mixed race is a relatively post-war phenomenon. Therefore, the *new era* of mixed race persons may be better understood from a counselling perspective, as it may be their 'otherness' which cannot be physically witnessed within the therapeutic encounter, that creates difficulty for them. This

further questions how therapists engage with what cannot be ‘witnessed’, and what constitutes race in the post- modern era.

Additional research should also endeavour to use a mixed sex sample, as the current findings only offer a female perspective. The current study only drew participation from women, regardless of the number of advertising runs conducted. For male participants, mixed race may be experienced differently. Using an all- male sample may also offer a different perspective of how mixed race identity is managed within the counselling room.

5.6 Critique and Evaluation

The Findings from this study aimed to give a subjective constructionist perspective of the study phenomenon, without claiming to generalise the findings to the population under investigation. The researcher’s positioning within the study was transparent insofar as analysing the data from a lived experience of otherness. However, it is acknowledged in keeping with the tenets of constructionist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), that another researcher may have engaged with the data differently. They may have offered an alternative account of the participants’ story, from a different reality and context to that of the current researcher’s positioning. The study takes into consideration Charmaz’ (2006) evaluation criteria, where credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness are put forward as factors in critiquing grounded theory.

5.6.1 Credibility

The study was developed over 3 years, where a substantial amount of time was spent immersed in both methodological explorations and subject matter. The researcher’s previous research within the area of mixed race identity, and health related coping mechanisms of mixed race- for a 5 year period prior to the current study, enabled a meaningful analysis of how to engage with the present study’s questions and aims. The emergent codes, categories

and themes were also iteratively compared with previous emergent results. New questions were formulated to explore the themes further, and to extract new themes. Using the same researcher to both interview and analyse the findings is cited as a shortcoming of the study. The use of a co- researcher may have enhanced the analytical process. However, the first two participants were sent a draft of their emergent themes, and concurred that it was a good reflection of their accounts. The use of counselling trainees in half of the sample led to a deeper exploration of the research question, enhancing its credibility. These participants had embarked for a longer period of time on a journey of self- insight. This gave them some in- depth understanding of the meanings and intentions behind how their therapist did or did not utilise their theoretical framework. It also resulted in fewer prompts being used to elicit data. The sample of lay clients was used in- line with theoretical sampling to test and further extricate the (trainee) participants' accounts of identity construction from a purer and perhaps more *positively naïve* assessment of their therapist. The overlapping and richer accounts of both of these 'types' of participants' therapy, confirmed the use of this unique style of sampling, and added to the originality of the study.

5.6.2 Originality

The study was the first to capture British mixed race clients' perspectives of being in therapy from an empirical perspective. It also encapsulated the emerging mixed ethnic demographic of Britain- the participants were from a variety of white European/ Mediterranean, African, Afro- Caribbean, Arabic and Asian backgrounds, adding to the previous findings of black/ white samples of mixed race identity development. The constructed categories offer a unique insight into how society position mixed race, amalgamating a psychoanalytical, philosophical, post-colonial and social-constructionist theories of categorisation of the Other. The researcher's own lived experience of colonial mixing, without living with the label of mixed race, enabled both an 'inside' and 'outside of'

perspective of mixed race. The findings further develop previous research enquires and offer ideas and avenues for future research. Furthermore, it gives an insight into the importance of intersectionality within counselling work, as the theories discussed encompass a wide set of philosophical, and therapeutic ideas of race and otherness. The idea of the therapist as an agent of society challenges current training philosophies regarding counselling, as it proposes a more post-colonial and social constructionist approach to training. It urges institutions to incorporate Ethics meaningfully into their training programmes, where trainees can be measured and critiqued on their ethical working with clients of Other status.

5.6.3 Resonance

The study captured the essence of the participants' accounts and overlapped key findings from a number of theoretical positions. It's uniqueness of themes captured the implicit and explicit beliefs about the participants' experience of counselling in their construction of Self. The core category, sub- categories and theoretical codes, lengthened the insight into how counselling and Self, encounter each other. The intersection of these concepts gave a full and rich interpretation of the aims of the study.

5.6.4 Usefulness

Counselling bodies, institutions and practitioners are all encouraged to interact with these findings in contemplating how macro- level and micro- level transgressions can impact on the healing work of therapy, and its usefulness as a profession. Larger scale ideologies regarding how mixed race people can change British society -by nature of their difference and sameness, must also be considered. With high profile figures such as British mixed race Olympians, scholars and politicians identifying as British foremost, there must be more urgency given to the *seeing* of mixed race. If Britain is to follow the US in promoting mixed race research, it may also have a political leader in the future, whose aim will be to straddle

and unite race by nature of their prominence (Obama, 1995). Practitioners have an important role in society in enabling children and adults to gain resilience and fortitude in how they construct Self within the counselling room. The study suggests that it provides knowledge to practitioners in how they may be enigmatic agents of societal change.

5.7 Critique of Methodology and Method

5.7.1 Methodology

The goal of this constructionist grounded theory study was to uncover a view of how mixed race clients construct and manage selfhood from a subjective theoretical positioning. It used Charmaz' (2006) notion of abstract findings, to give a reality of the given time and context. The study draws distinctions between this approach and that of Glaser and Strauss' (1967) more positivist assertions, which claim an objective truth of the phenomenon. The present findings are proposed as an analysis of the researcher's understanding of the participants' accounts. It highlights the researcher's relational approach to being an active participant in the conducting of the interviews, and the interpretation of the data. Charmaz (1995) states that the interaction between the researcher and participant produces the data, where the researcher as co- producer enriches the data by adding: "... a description of the situation, the interaction, the person's affect and (their) perception of how the interview went" (Charmaz, 1995., p.33). Charmaz (1995) explains that this is conducted through ensuring that the coding procedure facilitates the researcher's emersion in the data. Therefore the researcher's memoing was used to elucidate further avenues for exploration of implicit interactions between the participant and researcher. This highlighted feelings such as *fear* and *collusion*, which aligned with the verbatim accounts, ensuring data reliability, and a collaborative co- construction of the findings.

The use of a different methodology, such as discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), could be argued as being a more appropriate methodology in light of the linguistic influence of the participant's feelings of being 'othered'. However, the present study used Charmaz' (2006) constructionist grounded theory as it aimed to unearth meanings, intentions and beliefs, which incorporated different philosophical perspectives. The researcher acknowledges that another methodology may have yielded a different viewpoint from the participants, and offered an alternative insight into the narrative.

5.7.2 Researcher Effects

Although Strauss and Corbin's (1998) approach put forward an ontological reasoning for its methodology, the study recognises its proposition that the emergent theory is embedded in history and epoch's of time (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). However, the present study utilised Charmaz' (2006) methodology, as Strauss and Corbin's (1994) ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist approach still maintains an element of external reality. It assumes objectivity, which this study does not claim to do. Charmaz' (2006) main assertion- that how the researcher interacts with the data is seen to have a symbolic interactionist element to it, allows this study to incorporate an acknowledgement of the researcher's prior experiences and biases toward the phenomenon. For instance, the researcher's prior knowledge of mixed race meant that they approached the study from the perspective that no *a priori* existed in how mixed race may be managed within the therapeutic setting. The researcher's personal experience also enabled an insight into the fact that mixed race could not be viewed from a homogenous framework. However, it accepts that the interviews and analysis of data were performed with an interactionist lens, only giving an account of the researcher's perspective, the time and context of the interviews, and the participants used.

5.7.3 Critique of Sample

It could be argued that the sampling of trainee and lay clients mediated the findings. The design was used due to the sample size. To work with a relatively small sample in grounded theory, Charmaz (2006) recommends that the interviews be considerably in-depth in time and questions. She posits the depth of interviewing as being relative to the sample size (Charmaz, 2006), and states that the use of larger samples, with surface interviewing, will not uncover the phenomenon being investigated. Although the study was similar to other previous dissertations and research conducted using grounded theory (Winning, 2010; Athanasiadou, 2011; Duan, 2011), which use between 6- 12 participants, it also considered the grounded theory tenets of large samples, when developing the used design. The current sample of 8 participants was therefore considered appropriate if a suitably in-depth enquiry was conducted. The present study interviewed participants for 1 ½ - 2 hours. Using trainee counsellor clients for the longer length interviews enabled a critical analysis of the study phenomenon, as it was assumed that they may have the emotional resilience to withstand longer interviews. Their accounts married with the lay participants' narratives, and visa - versa. Both sets of narratives overlapped and produced new emergent themes. It could be surmised that using only lay clients, or solely trainee counsellor clients may have unearthed a different set of findings. However, trainee counsellors should be deemed to be clients within their own right and thus deserving to be seen as a 'client'. Another critique of the sample was the use of an all- female sample, due to only females responding to the advertising. The findings may have elicited a different set of findings, had males been interviewed. Conversely, research shows that women are better able to access their emotions, and provide greater insight into their psychological processes (Snyder, McDermott, Leibowitz & Cheavens, 2000). Nevertheless, the current study accepts the findings are purely an account of the female perspective of the construction of mixed race identity with the therapy room.

The average age of participants was 31 years old. This is seen as a positive contribution to a post- modern observation of mixed race. However, the increase of the mixed race population between 2006 and 2011, as stated by the ONS (2011), highlights that an adult perspective- using a younger sample, may have offered a different perspective. The participants all identified as upper working class to middle class. This contextualises the results, as a different class demographic may have produced a different account of issues such as racism. However, the modern construct of mixed race with Britain may allude to it not being reflective of an upper class demographic, due to the recent post- war immigrant status of their parents. However, it is accepted that utilising a lower working class sample may have mediated or heightened the narratives around race and exclusion.

5.7.4 Critiques of Context

The context of the interviews could be seen as impacting on the findings. The participants were offered the use of Roehampton University's study rooms to ensure anonymity and neutrality. However, it could be argued that a strange environment may have impacted on the quality of the interview. Furthermore, the use of an academic institution may have led participants to mediate their views on therapy and personal information. However, this is difficult to surmise due to the intimate narratives which were conveyed. Importantly, the use of Roehampton study rooms for some interviewees was their preferred choice. Two of the participants asked if they could be interviewed in their home for convenience. Alternatively, their home environment may have created an anxiety of a stranger being in their personal space. This was discussed with the participant via email, prior to confirming their interview. It is suggested that allowing the participant to choose their setting facilitated rapport, and mediated power between interviewer and interviewee.

The researcher was also part of the profession they were investigating, in their role as a Trainee Counselling Psychologist. Therefore, the stories the participants told were reflected

upon with an implicit understanding that the researcher may also unconsciously partake in the *unseeing* and *unhearing* of the participant during their interview. This was at times a complex negotiation, whilst trying to extricate a faithful description of the participants' interaction with their therapist. The researcher was also empathic to the poignancy of the narratives, which had a greater impact in how they engaged with the interviewee, and the answers they gave.

The geographical context showed that all the participants interviewed lived in London and its urban surroundings. This meant that their interviews gave a perspective exclusive to this area. Although the demographic endeavoured to be made up of a sample where their earlier life experience was a combination of different geographic locations, their experience of therapy all incorporated the use of London based therapists. It is difficult to predict if the study would have produced a different set of findings, had it been conducted in a different part of the country. It is suggested that the cosmopolitanism of London, if anything mediated the impact of the results. However, this is difficult to predict.

5.8 Reflexive Considerations

During the development of the study, my own personal therapy allowed me to observe from a client perspective, how I- as the Other is seen and heard within the room. This allowed for a crystalized perception of what it may have felt like to be 'unseen' at times. My own therapy moreover allowed me to interact with a skilled practitioner, who was able to recognise otherness, and illustrated how the tensions of difference and sameness can be meaningfully explored through competent ethical practice. This helped my awareness of what might be missing from the participant's interactions with their therapist, and facilitated the development of the interview schedules. My lived experience as a mixed Sri- Lankan person helped me to empathise with the participants' narrative to some extent. However, I was also acutely aware that their identification and indeterminate physical appearance carried a

multitude of distinctive emotions and experiences in the world, which could only be understood through the depth of their interviews, and that my own assumptions of mixed race needed to be explored within my therapy. My role as a therapist- working with mixed race clients; as a researcher within this study; and as a mother to mixed race children- needed to be considered simultaneously, for me to do justice to the present study.

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